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[THE TEMPTER.]

STRANGELY MARRIED.

By ERNEST BRENT,

Author of "Strayed Away," "Milly Lee," "John Kendrake's Destiny," &c.

CHAPTER IV.

Why, you do surely know
That since my days were counted for a man's
I have loved you!
Why, it was in my flesh, my bone, and blood,
Born it in my brain, to love you! yes, and writ
All my heart over, if I would lie to you
I doubt I could not lie. Ah, you see now!
You know how well enough! — Swinburne.

JOHN LENMORE had not expected that Mr. Dacre would deal with him so kindly. He had plenty of self-reliant power, and few things seemed impossible to him; but he did not shut his eyes to the fact that there was a wide difference between his position and the position of Mr. Dacre's ward.

Had it not been that he possessed to a large extent the inward strength that is the very instinct of success, he never would have dared to aspire so high—he would have suppressed the passion when he found it growing, given it up as the hopeless fancy of a dreamer; but when he found that Lizzie loved him, the rest seemed easy.

"I do not say, till you are rich," said Mr. Dacre, before they parted. "I know too well the weariness of waiting, hoping on while youth goes from us and our hair grows gray. When you have a steady certainty of a decent income, Lizzie shall be your wife. To give her to you before would not be just to either."

"Will you fix the limit of that income?" asked John, measuring his chances before he received the answer.

"Yes. When you can prove to me that the practice of your profession for one year has brought you in four hundred pounds, I will be content."

The young man looked at him gravely and reflected. Mr. Dacre was moderate in his demands;

he studied the fitness of things, and knew that nothing less than the sum named would provide fairly for a girl who had been brought up like Lizzie, in the quiet luxury of Thorpenden Lodge.

"The conditions may seem hard," said Dacre, "but you must remember that you have aimed high, John Lenmore. Miss Amory will have something like a fortune."

"I would rather she were poor, Mr. Dacre."

"The sentiment is good, John; but it is merely sentiment—there is nothing in it. A professional man ought to marry a lady, but that lady ought not to be left entirely dependent on the exigencies of his profession or the chance of his life. To you, who have not a shilling, the four hundred a-year may seem a hard condition, but what position could you maintain on less?"

"None, certainly; and even with that, or twice that, I could not give Lizzie such a home as this."

"It is not necessary that you should. When you are in receipt of the income stated you can begin very well. If Lizzie were a poor man's child, and you were a mechanic, I would say, take her at once. You would have no appearances to study, and your six-and-thirty, or whatever number of shillings you might get weekly, would be sufficient for your needs; but in the profession you think of entering you must keep a good house, if it is only in the suburbs, you must see society, and your wife must dress like her neighbours. I do not wish to throw cold water on the warmth of your love, but I tell you these things are the true essentials to happiness."

"The practical essentials," smiled Lenmore, "have thought of them, Mr. Dacre. Do not so far mistake me as to think I dream, either in love or ambition. I have measured my strength against the strength of other men, and I shall not be a loser in the struggle."

"What if Lizzie should change her mind, and you yours?"

John Lenmore's fine gray eyes were full of the deep and tranquil conviction that no such change could come.

"Let that be the only fear," he said, "and I shall not wear the shadow of a trouble!"

He took love then. He went away with courage in his breast, and he had not left the Lodge far behind when he met Lizzie, as he expected. The groom was certainly gifted with discretion, for no sooner did they meet than he saw something to study in the aspect of the sky.

Miss Amory had partly suspected her guardian's intentions, and she had suffered not a little during her long absence. He walked towards her with a strong and steady stride. She could not tell either by his walk or his face what there was to hope or fear; but when he was close Lizzie could read in his eyes the powerful joy of his soul.

"Was he angry?" asked Lizzie, as he took her hand. "I thought he looked very stern. Did he speak severely?"

"He spoke like the true-hearted man he is," said John; "treated me with the graceful courtesy of a gentleman. Let the groom take your horse, and I will tell you all Mr. Dacre said, and I will walk by your side. Or, no, James shall take my horse."

He lifted her down, and beckoned to the groom.

"You can follow us," he said. "Miss Amory will walk for the present."

"Yes, sir."

James rode the horses into the lane. John Lenmore and his companion took the footpath into the woods towards Glen Farm. They went that way by the force of habit, and they had picked out one of the prettiest rambles in that part of the country.

In the friendly shelter of the trees that edged the narrow footway John Lenmore drew Miss Amory to his breast, and a long kiss told his gladness.

"He will let me woo you, Lizzie," he said. "We may write to each other; I may come and see you; and you are to be my wife when I am rich enough."

Miss Amory looked thoughtful over the last words. Womanlike, she was not given to reflections concerning money matters. She knew that when her guardian wanted money he wrote to the bank in the nearest town, and a genteel young man brought him

quite a little volume of bank-notes and lots of sovereigns in canvas bags, and she had a dim idea that when John Lenmore wanted money he did the same.

"When you are rich enough," she repeated. "What does he mean?"

"The meaning is simple. I am to earn a certain income in a gentlemanly way. We are to be as rich as we can with love and four hundred a-year, and I am to earn it."

"But I shall be rich, John. Uncle has always told me so."

"He told me so too, and pointed to it as a reason why I should not be poor. Mr. Dacre remembered—what I did not forget—that I am the second son of a country gentleman who farms his own land, a man of comparatively low degree."

Lizzie only cared to think of Mr. Lenmore as John's father; had he been titled he could have been no more; had he been a cottager he could have been no less.

John Lenmore told her all his plans for the future, and they did not need much telling. He was going to devote himself to the study of the law, because he believed the law to be a gentlemanly and lucrative profession. He chose it, too, because it was a profession in which few succeeded, while many tried to succeed. There was, he thought, the better chance for one who would go in for hard work, and devote himself to it with a liking and a purpose.

"But is not difficult to make money that way?" asked Miss Amory, brought gravely down to see the necessity. "I have heard until talking to Fred about those things, and he does not seem to think much of professional men. He says that hundreds fail where ton succeed."

"And he says the truth, Lizzie. When a man makes choice of a profession he should ascertain how it is suited for it. Some men take to literature and think they have but to write a book to be rich and popular for ever, never thinking of the weary drudgery a writer must go through before he can hope to take even a moderate place. Others, who have hardly an idea of a correct outline, try to enter the artistic world, and if they fail by their own fault say the age is not prepared to receive genius. I believe that patient industry must win its way. A man cannot go on working for ever without having his reward."

"You will succeed," said Lizzie, in a tone of quiet conviction. "I think, John, you are one of those men who never fail in anything."

She did not mean it as flattery. He had long since impressed her with a sense of his powers. He was different from other men; she could not have explained how he was different, but the difference was there.

They went on talking in a low tone, her hand on his arm, their hands clasped, when they came upon a little party from Glen Farm—William Lenmore and Mildred, Fred Amory and Mary. They were seen, and there was no help for it.

Fred, laughing with Murry, like the great gay-hearted boy he sometimes was, looked suddenly and curiously grave. William Lenmore smiled and so did Mildred, then cast a smile of tender sympathy at both.

"Rather a queer way of taking equestrian exercise," said Fred. "They manage things very nicely, Mary, don't they? Liz won't come out because she prefers a ride; Jack won't stay in because he prefers a walk; and thus by a singular coincidence they meet. See how cool they are, too."

They were. For a young lady and gentleman surprised as they had been, they bore it with remarkable unconcern.

"I had better take Fred into my confidence," thought John, as Lizzie left his arm for Mary, and linking his arm with Mr. Amory's, he dropped behind the others.

"Where did you meet Liz, Jack?"

"At the door of the Lodge."

"And how long have things been going on in that style?"

"Some time now. You are not sorry, I hope?"

"No—but no matter now, however. Things will settle themselves, I suppose; but I don't know what Uncle Dacre will say."

"Then I can enlighten you," said John, quietly. "I have his sanction to our engagement, and as soon as I am in a suitable position, Lizzie will be my wife." Fred did not appear to be so much pleased as the other expected; there was a constraint, not to say a sadness, in his manner.

"I shall prove myself worthy of Lizzie's love and Mr. Dacre's trust," said John, rather proudly. "Your sister might have chosen a richer man, I admit; but I did not think you were mercenary."

"My dear fellow," said Fred, with an accession of warmth John thought rather too sudden, and not altogether real, "there is nothing I should like better than to see you both together."

"Then your manner at first was singularly unhappy in expressing such a feeling."

"I was thinking of something else, Jack—something that troubled me."

"You lost money, I suppose, at the last steeple-chase, and your uncle does not know of it?"

"Not that altogether," said Fred, colouring; "but I should like to get away from here."

"The better for you if you can. You are mixed up with a bad lot, Fred."

"I don't know; they are good fellows enough, and Dalrymple is a regular swell—by Jove, he elects the people down this part."

"He electrifies a good deal of money out of their pockets, too, I think. I have heard about it, Fred. Things do get known, you know—that little card-room at the Fisherman's Arms, the dice, the betting work, the wine breakfasts, the night play. What would Mr. Dacre say to it?"

"More than I should like to hear," said Fred, with a sigh. "That's why I want to get away; each place is too quiet for me, and I am sure to get into mischief. I wanted to go abroad, but Mr. Dacre says I am too young. I wish you would put in a word for me."

"I will," said John. "I would do anything to get you out of the way of danger. If your present habits were to grow upon you, you would be ruined

man."

Fred took the remark in all humility. It was spoken kindly, and he felt its force. He was easily led into evil, having been into dissipation. It is the fault of a too generous nature, that giving too much it expects too much. He would forgive any laxity on the part of a friend, and he expected any laxity on his part to be forgiven in return.

"Who is that Mr. Dalrymple?" John enquired.

"An awfully rich fellow—handsome, isn't he?"

"Very, in his way."

"Did you ever see such a face?"

"No; and never wish to see another such."

"Why, it is like a piece of sculpture!"

"Just like a piece of sculpture," said John Lenmore, "or rather like a picture painted by a painter with an evil thought of beauty—plenty of power in it, and a gleam of Satanism peeping through."

"You do not know him," said Fred, thoughtfully, "or you would not say that; he is strange now and then, and hard to read."

"A dangerous man to know!" said John. "I have not made his acquaintance—I have never seen you together—and yet I am certain that you and your companions are heavily in his debt."

"Most of us are, I believe."

"He plays, I should say, very gaily—keeps the wine going—amuses you with an anecdote told *en passant* as he deals or throws for a heavier stake; he leads you on, as it were, in a way so graceful that you could not well refuse to follow; he can be sarcastic, keen, brilliant: he has good nerve, and he is the master-spirit of your little dissipated society."

"Every word of that is true," said Fred, honestly; "though it did not strike me till you put it in that light."

"You are in trouble and you are in peril," said Lenmore, very gravely. "This man has made you a hypocrite to your guardian; made you act a falsehood if you have never spoken one. Now, you ought to know Mr. Dacre thoroughly."

"So I do."

"Then you know that the truthful course is the best with him; let him know everything before you go any further; tell him what you owe, to whom, and how you lost the money; ask him to find you something to do, give you a moderate income, and place you in the way to earn more. You have too much money, and you live a life of utter idleness, and these are the things that make the links of Satan's fetters."

John Lenmore spoke with the kindly gravity of an elder brother. He liked Fred Amory for his own sake as well as for Lizzie's; there were splendid points in Frederick's nature, and he was just at the age when for good or ill he would take the fixed impressions of his lifetime.

"If you know how deeply you are loved at home," said John, "you would never run the risk of giving pain."

"They are fond of me," said Fred, with some self-reproach. "A father could not be kinder to me than Mr. Dacre is; and little Liz too, I believe she thinks there is not such a brother in the world."

"And there is one who cares for you more than either you have mentioned," said John Lenmore, seriously, "one who loves you with almost more than woman's love."

Fred had not given up his boyish habit of blushing, and the colour rose high in his cheeks as he said:

"Who do you mean?"

"I mean Miss Dacre, Mildred,—and I tell you,

Frederick Amory, it is something to be loved by such a woman."

"Yes, Mil always was fond of me," he said, carelessly. "You see, we were children together."

"Will you promise me, for her sake, Fred, that you will never go to the Fisherman's Arms again, never gamble, and drop the acquaintance of the man Dalrymple, promise—with your hand upon it."

"I promise," said Fred, rather reluctantly. "It will be better for me, perhaps. I feel bad over it sometimes, and I know it isn't right."

CHAPTER V.

I have a work yet for mine honour's sake,
A thing to do, God wot I know not how,
Nor how to crave it of you! Nay, by heaven,
I will not shame myself to show it you:
I have not heart!

CHASTELARD: *A Tragedy.*

HAD Mr. Frederick Amory not been gifted with the redeeming quality of truthfulness he would have been in very serious danger. Mischief in some shape or other finds its way everywhere, as he had said, and mischief in the worst shape it can assume had found its way to Thorpendean.

It had the common fault of country places. In the best time of the year there were excitement and amusement in plenty; in the long, dull winter-season there was nothing. A charitable bazaar now and then, a little amateur concert, perhaps, once a fortnight, and an occasional meet of the hounds—enough for ladies, who could fill in the time with interminable cards and interminable gossip, enough for the country-bred gentlemen of the neighbourhood, who had the fresh fields to talk about, heavy dinners to eat and wine to drink, and the gout to cultivate. The young men required a change.

They tired of riding in sulkies and top-boots after a fox's miserable run, they tired of the charitable bazaar and the well-intended concert, and by degrees they formed a little clique that met at an old-fashioned inn between the sea-coast and Thorpendean.

At first their meetings were sufficiently innocent—the current local topics, or news from *Bell's Life*, cigar and bitter beer at the bar, and perhaps a toe-up for a shampagne.

By-and-by they began to stay longer, played in runs with the dice, or took hand-cards, if detained by a shower. Then the little clique increased, the meetings became regular, and the bar was exchanged for a private room. Men who had picked up the manners and the views of club-life crept in, and the evil began.

For the man who begins to gamble, and, having lost, keeps on in the hope of winning back his losses, there is little hope. The gambler is inevitably a hard drinker—not a drunkard, with thick articulation, a shaking hand, and unsteady feet, but a man whose veins are always full of a false, feverish strength, that must be fed on stimulants. Drink becomes a habit as dangerous to break as to continue. The man has no time to reflect: he shuns reflection.

Fred Amory had not yet gone to this extent. He was not his own master, and though the hand that governed him was an indulgent one, he knew that it would turn to iron if his misdoings were known.

The young man might have gone on and fallen into deeper peril, but he had quite exhausted his supply of money, and he could not ask for more with good grace. Mr. Dacre paid all his expenses and allowed him two hundred a-year for the present, given to him in monthly portions in order to check any sudden desire for extravagance.

On several occasions Fred had dropped into the club with nearly an empty pocket and he saw a difference in his reception. He was a minor, and his notes of hand for debts were worth nothing. When he had no ready money they could not win from him, and his company was worth nothing to them.

"They are a seedy lot of beggars, after all," thought Fred, when he recollected one of these cold receptions. "It's folly to think they have a morsel of regard for a fellow for his own sake; they like him best who can lose most. I owe Bolton a hundred, and he offered to buy my horse for eighty, and said he did not mind my note for the odd twenty. I did not see it, though."

The recollection added to his reflections on what John Lenmore had said, determined him, and he resolved to give up the acquaintance. He had made the same resolution many times before. There was no one ready at a promise, or better stocked with good intentions, and they came to nothing as a rule.

This time, however, the good intention was carried out before it had time to cool. His money being gone he did not care to go out, and he stayed quietly indoors, playing billiards with the girls, having a rubbers at whist with them and Mr. Dacre in the evening, and reading to them or singing. Mr. Dacre was pleased at the change.

One evening, when the master of the Lodge had been unusually genial, Fred mustered up courage to tell him the truth. They were lingering over their

wine and talking of things in general, and Mr. Dacre was thinking with pleasure that Fred was growing manlier and more thoughtful.

"Uncle," said Fred, taking advantage of a favourable pause, "I wish you would send me out of England."

"Why, my boy?"

"It's so slow here. There is nothing to do. I am getting into bad habits, that is the truth; besides, I feel like an idler, a dependent, and I want to be something better. If you think I cannot manage as my own master, put me under someone."

That was fair and frank enough, and Mr. Dacre looked up with inward approbation, but it seemed to him that there must be a strong reason for Fred's desire.

"Why have you thought of this?" he asked.

"I have been getting into trouble. I had better tell the truth at once."

"You had certainly better tell the truth," was the grave reply. "And what is the trouble? You are out of money, I suppose, before you ought to be?"

"Worse."

"In debt? Though I do not see how you can be in debt."

"Debts of honour, uncle. That's the whole of it."

Mr. Dacre's countenance settled down into severity.

"Tell me everything," he said, briefly, and he sat back in his chair to listen.

Fred, warmed by the wine and moved to desperation by the necessity, began the recital. It did not take long to tell, and he told it in a shame-faced, careless way.

"Just a few games at cards," he said, "with a five-pound note on, and one or two afternoons at the races, and a little coin on the races. All the other fellows do it, and I did not like to stand out."

"You lost your money?"

"Well, yes, I did."

"How much do you owe?"

"There's a hundred to Beeton; it was fifty, but we went double or nothing."

"And he won?"

"Yes, he won."

Fred's heart was beginning to misgiv him at his guardian's tone.

"How much more?"

Fred did not like to say—it was a matter over which he knew Mr. Dacre would be severe. He thought over what he had best do, and he resolved, unfortunately, to tell a fib instead of all the truth.

"A few odd pounds to the other fellows," he said, "and fifty or so to Dalrymple."

"Would two hundred pounds cover the entire account?"

The young man did not face his guardian's steady gaze as he replied:

"Quite!"

It was his first positive untruth, and he was ashamed of it. Had he said five hundred instead of two he would not have been very wide of the mark, for Dalrymple was more indulgent than the others, and would take his note of hand instead of ready money.

"Come to me in the library in ten minutes," said Mr. Dacre, rising, and leaving his wine unfinished. "I will tell you then what I intend to do."

Fred bowed respectfully. He was in for a lecture, and he felt that he deserved it. It was a bad sign for him that Mr. Dacre left his wine and chose the library for the interview.

When the ten minutes had elapsed Fred went to join his guardian. He had made up his mind for the worst. Mr. Dacre had several books open before him, and a letter lay upon the table. He motioned Fred to take a chair.

"I am more sorry and disappointed than angry with you," he said. "If you were my own son I should be more severe than I can be now. I did not think you would ever deceive me, Fred."

"I am very sorry, sir."

"I never thought you would degenerate into a vice so mean. You should have borne in mind that no true gentleman ever gambles. The gambler is never many removes from a rascal. It is always the monied snob or the well-born profligate who plays away his money."

"I had begun to think the name."

"Because you were unfortunate enough to lose, and were not prepared for the day of reckoning. You have no money to meet those debts that you are polite enough to call debts of honour. I think the proper name for them is debts of shame. A gentleman can no more afford to take another's money than he can afford to lose his own. The gambler is as despicable as the drunkard, and he is rarely one without being the other. You are listening?"

Fred was listening, with cheeks that burned in self-humiliation.

"The gambler, if successful, is never respected

out of his own isolated set; if unsuccessful, he is never respected either in or out of it. The men who win your money care nothing for you without your money. You will not find one amongst the whole set with a really true and generous heart. Lose all you have to lose, and then you may go home. No one respects—no one pities you! If you have lost more than you can afford, they say you are dishonourable. If you ruin yourself to pay, their epitaph on the living ruin is simply: 'More fool he!'

Fred admitted the truth of this with much contrition.

"Save the money that you spend," replied Mr. Dacre, "and good men will respect you. Whether you make money in trade, profession, or business—whether you are tinker or tailor, publican or doctor, journalist or lawyer, if you make your income in a fair and legitimate way, you are immeasurably above the monied snobs and silly, spendthrift idlers who bet on billiards, cards, dice, roulette. The hand of an honest man is soiled by contact with them."

"I saw my error, sir, and wished to atone for it," said Fred, gathering courage now. "Thorpean is too quiet for me. I have no aptitude for study, as you know. I want an active life."

"And you shall have one," said Mr. Dacre. "The time is come when your character must be fixed, and I should like to see what there is in the man who, when I am gone, ought to be the guardian of his sister and my daughter Mildred. You shall have the money to pay these debts of shame. That is settled, and never let me hear of it again."

For the second time Fred regretted that he had not told the entire truth.

"I shall send you to the Cape," said Mr. Dacre, altering his tone now the lecture was finished. "You want a lesson in real hard work such as I had. I was a poor man when I went out there, and now, I suppose, I have as much property as any man in the colony. My agent wrote to me," and he referred to the open letter, "that his secretary is going up the country, and he wishes to know if I would like to appoint a successor, or leave the choice to him. I may tell you that a colonial secretaryship to a landed proprietor is not a delicate-fingered sinecure. It is hard work, hard riding, dealing with men who require the argument of muscle as well as words to bind them. I did it for myself. Do you feel inclined to do it for yourself and for me?"

It was a rough blow to Fred. He had lived like a gentleman, and looked upon himself as Mr. Dacre's heir. His proud spirit rose for one moment, and in the next, reflection came. A secretaryship to his guardian's agent was rather a humble position, but then without his guardian what was he? The answer was simple: Nothing. When Mr. Dacre married his old love, Mary Amory, she was on the verge of want. Her children, but for that marriage, would have been dependant on the charity of the world. And after all, Mr. Dacre was asking Fred to do what Mr. Dacre himself had done.

"It will be good discipline for you, Fred—teach you manly self-reliance. You will not find such as the half-bred aristocracy of this place in the colonies. It was there I picked up my habit of plain speaking and my liking for the truth. Men live by trade there, and their sons are not ashamed of it."

"I am willing to go, Mr. Dacre, when you wish. It can do no harm to do as you have done."

The answer pleased Mildred's father.

"My agent's secretary has a hundred and fifty a year, a horse to ride, and a house to live in. If you go out it will be on the same terms. I shall leave you entirely to Mr. Bryant, my agent. He is an honest man, and a faithful steward I have found him. He has been in my service twenty years. I am sure he will treat you properly—that is to say, on your own merits. The fact of your being my stepson will make no difference to him."

"As he has your confidence, uncle, I have no doubt we shall agree."

"He will give you a hundred a year for the first four years, the odd fifty will be paid to me to clear off this two hundred pounds I am lending you to settle your debts of honour with, and as I am placing you in the way of an independence, your private income will be discontinued till I recall you. If you are inclined to be discontented, remember that you have brought it on yourself, and I am dealing with you exactly as I would deal with my own son—more leniently perhaps."

"I am not ungrateful, sir; I do not forget what I owe you."

"It may occur," said Mr. Dacre, "that when out there, you will have opportunities of making money. Never let them pass, but write to me at once; and to make it an independent transaction on your part, I will lend you the sum required, to trade with. I will send you a written order, cheque-form, which you will endorse, and present to Bryant, who will give you cash."

Mr. Dacre's letter was dated July 1, 1870.

"Thanks," said Fred, with a smile; "I may make fortune on my own account."

"I made one. There are others in plenty who did the same. Looking over my books just now I find that my trade and property out there would realise one hundred-and-thirty thousand pounds."

"By Jove," thought Fred, "beside the estate here! My share of it will be worth something if I do not spoil my own chance."

The reflection was not so selfish as it seems. Mr. Dacre had always given him to understand that he would have a third of the property. It was a worldly reflection, but Fred had mixed with worldly men.

Mr. Dacre was a man of action, and the plan once resolved upon was to be soon carried out.

"Pay these debts of honour," said Mr. Dacre, with a stinging emphasis on the words that made Fred disgusted with himself and the men who had helped him into the humiliation. "Take a final farewell of your associates, and prepare for starting within a fortnight."

"A fortnight?" faltered Fred.

"Is it too soon?"

"It is rather sudden, sir; but I will be ready."

Mr. Dacre was not a man to be resisted when he had made up his mind. He was rarely otherwise than gentle and indulgent, but when the will of iron was required it was there.

Mr. Amory left the library with a cheque for two hundred pounds in his pocket; with the possession of money the old longing came upon him, but he fought it down. He pictured his gay companions at the table—the lights, the sparkle of wines, the racy anecdote, and the brilliant interchange of repartee.

"I will just ride over and pay the fellows what I can," he resolved, "tell them they shall have the rest some day, and let them know what I am going to do. Then good-bye to them."

He rang the bell and ordered his horse; while he was waiting for it Mildred came in.

"I thought you were with father, Fred."

"And so I was till just now."

"He seems very serious. Is anything wrong?"

"Nothing much, Mil; only I have been putting my foot in it, and he is going to send me to California, or Australia, or the Cape of Good Hope, or somewhere; amongst the Kaffirs or the Hottentots, and the fellows who eat people, I think."

"And you are going away?" she said, her voice trembling. "What have you been doing to make him angry?"

"Getting into mischief, for which I seem to have a predilection, losing a few hundreds, as other fellows do; but uncle shuts up his book against that kind of thing, and he is going to try if a few years hard work will knock it out of me."

Lightly as he spoke there was a vein of sadness in his tone that won Mildred's sympathy at once.

"And you are really going, Fred?"

"He says so, and you know what that means."

Mildred did know, and her heart sank. No one suspected how hard it was for her to lose the thoughtless, handsome fellow who had been her companion since childhood.

"Promise me, Fred," she said, putting her little hand in his, "that when you are away you will never get into such trouble."

He looked down into her face, and something in its wistful beauty, something in her large, loving eyes touched him. He was gentler in tone, in action than usual, as stooping to kiss her he said:

"I'll be as good as I can, for your sake, Mildred. Sending me away may be the best thing for me, but it is hard to leave the old place, and Liz, and May, and, hardest of all, from you, for I think, Mildred, you care for me best of any."

He wondered why she answered him with such a sadly passionate smile; he was but a boy or he would have known long since how it pained her to see him yield to temptation—how gladly she would have shielded him in the glory of her love! He knew that Mildred was fond of him, but then they were children together, and that, he thought, accounted for it in the natural way.

CHAPTER VI.

I have said too much . . .
And laid mine honour too uncharily on't:
There's something in me that reproves my fault,
But such a headstrong, potent fault it is,
That it mocks itself.

MR. AMORY had, for a wonder, the strength of mind to adhere to his good resolutions. He rode over to the Fisherman's Arms and alighted at the door.

"You need not take the saddle off," he said to the attendant who came out, and knowing the habits of the horse's master, would have put the animal in the stable, never expecting him to be required for some hours; "I am not going to stay. Are the gentlemen here?"

"Yes, sir; Mr. Dalrymple and two or three more in the private room."

"Thanks."
"Shall I keep the horse here, sir?"
"Yes."

And Fred strode upstairs and made his way into a little room, as cheerful as a fire, lights, wine, and a gay company could make it. There were four gentlemen at a table near the fireplace, and the cards were being dealt.

"Just in time to take a hand, Amory," said the dealer, but Fred shook his head with a grave smile; the impression made upon him by Mr. Dacre had not had time to fade.

"I have come to settle up as far as I can, and say good-bye to this kind of thing," said Fred, briefly. "It has been too pleasant and too expensive to last, and the end is come."

He addressed himself particularly to one gentleman, and that one surveyed him with a slightly cynical smile. He had heard similar professions many a time, and seen them fall as frequently.

"I will not keep you from the game!" cried Fred, in a tone of decision. "I owe you a hundred, Belton, and you, Dalrymple, goodness knows how much! My uncle has given me a cheque for two hundred, and it's all I shall get—it's all you will get, either."

Paul Dalrymple turned down his cards and laughed. He was a singularly handsome fellow, with soft, Italian eyes, silky black hair, and a pale, pure complexion; his voice was low, distinct, and pleasant; his manner very quiet—so quiet that it had a subduing influence over his associates, and even over strangers; he was elegant in figure, and slender—so slender that the clear, nervous grace and power of limb and body were not perceptible at first.

"You have the merit of frankness," he said, pleasantly. "What is the matter, Fred? You may as well sit down."

"No, thank you. I know myself too well, and I cannot afford the risk; a glass or two of wine—the sight of you fellows playing, and the money I have brought to pay with would very likely be added to my losses. I have had my eyes opened to-night, I tell you."

"How was that, Fred?"

"I had to tell Mr. Dacre how I stood, and what I had been doing; and I had to remember the awkward little fact that I am solely dependent on him for my future. If instead of telling him the truth I had left him to find it out, he would have cut me off with something less than the proverbial shilling."

"So like a good boy you did the penitent!" said Dalrymple, with a smile in his eye; "but perhaps you have made a good resolution, Fred. I shall follow your example, I think."

"Better for you if you do. However, there it is. Here's a cheque for two hundred—half for Belton and half for you. I may be able to give you the balance by-and-bye, but it won't be for a few years."

"I owe Dalrymple a hundred and some odd," said Belton, "so he had better have my share; but you don't mean it, Fred?"

"I do," said Fred, decisively.

And they saw he was in earnest.

"Your debts of honour lie easily on your conscience, Fred," observed Dalrymple, pleasantly, but with an inward chagrin he took care to conceal; "to pay one hundred out of five, and give an indefinite promise for the rest, is hardly the thing between gentlemen. I think if the case were mine I should fix a date and put it on paper."

"That would be only fair," suggested Belton.

And his suggestion was echoed by the rest. Birds of prey have a strange sort of sympathy for each other, and very little pity for the quarry. Fred could not appeal against their verdict.

"I will do so if you like," he said; "but you might take my word."

Mr. Dalrymple had taken a slip of paper from his pocket-book, and was writing on it.

"How old are you?" he said, not noticing the last remark.

"Nineteen."

"Turned?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, just sign that. You need not acknowledge it when it is due without you like, as a note of promise given by a minor is not valid. It is just to fix it in your memory. Belton can put his hand to it as witness."

Fred thought it rather hard, but he signed. He did not mind binding himself in writing, but he did not like the doubt implied on his honour.

"Two years after date," the document ran, "I promise to pay Paul Dalrymple the whole or part of the sum of four hundred pounds, honourably due from me to him for value received."

"Signed, FREDERICK AMORY.
Witness, CECIL BELTON."

Paul Dalrymple affixed the date, wrote his name on the back, and replaced the paper in his pocket-book.

"It is not worth a penny," he said, "if you choose to repudiate it. But these matters between gentlemen should always be strict. Have a glass of wine, old fellow, and let us drink success to your reformation."

Fred drank a couple of glasses and shook hands with the company. If anything had been wanting to strengthen his determination, it was afforded by the eagerness displayed to take his money and keep him to his word. He took leave rather coldly, and with a little hauteur, that was not unobserved by Dalrymple, who rose to follow him.

"And you are really going straight back to the Lodge?" said Dalrymple, when they were outside.

"Straight back."

"Well, old fellow," and Dalrymple changed his tone to one of cordial friendship, "put the reins over your arm and let us walk together. I daresay you thought it rather hard of me just now, but I had a reason for it. I have been hit heavily myself lately, and the sight of that bit of paper will keep the fellows from pressing. I shall never use it."

Fred Amory had generous impulses, and he had learned to like Dalrymple. He was easily reconciled. "Mr. Dacre is going to send me out of the country for this," he said. "It is a kind of thing that he never pardons. He made his money by hard work, you know, until he came into the property here."

"So I have heard," and there was a strange look on the statuesque face that Fred did not see; "but he is stern, is he not?"

"Justly so. Besides a few years at the Cape may do me no harm, and he is going to give me a chance of making money."

Then he told his friend, without reserve, all that had passed between himself and Mr. Dacre. It interested Dalrymple deeply, and produced a marked change in his manner.

"I should like to come with you, Fred," he said, with a genial smile, "it would cure me of some bad habits, too, and I could use part of my capital out there. I am not so rich as people think me," he added, with a sigh, "but my mother is too proud to seem poor."

There was one thing in Dalrymple that always disarmed Fred of any latent distrust. Whenever he spoke of his mother his voice took a low, tender tone.

"If you are serious, Paul, there is nothing I should like better; and you are too good to go on with the life you are leading. See what company we should be for each other."

"I shall have a good think over it before you start, Fred; but you need not mention it to Mr. Dacre. He must be very rich—a hundred-and-thirty thousand pounds in the colonies, besides his property in Thordenean. Why, Fred, your share of that is worth the little hardship you may undergo."

"So I thought," cried Fred, simply. "And you have no idea how much I like the idea of having you with me."

"I think I shall go. I like to feel that I have a purpose, Fred, something higher and better than riding, drinking, and gaming with the fellows about here. By the way, Fred, you have forgotten your promise."

"My promise?"

"To introduce me to your sister. What a glorious creature she is! Titian would have loved such a face for his Madonna—just such sweet, blue eyes—such radiant golden-tinted hair. I would give my soul for her."

"And you have never spoken to her?"

"We do not speak to the stars," said Dalrymple, with a thrill of enthusiasm; "but we see their beauty, and we worship them. I love your sister as I never loved a woman yet. You will introduce me before you go?"

"Too late, Dalrymple; she is engaged."

Paul Dalrymple paused, and the beauty of his face set with a strange whiteness.

"To whom?"

"Jack Lenmore. I was thinking of you when he told me, and my congratulations were not so warm as they ought to have been."

"To John Lenmore," said Dalrymple, with a low, fierce intonation, "the son of a farmer! That glorious, queenly girl engaged to him! Why, she is a woman for a king to worship, and for him—him!"

He paused and raised his right hand with a savage gesture to the sky. And his pent-up passion found vent in an awful oath. All the demon within him was up and raging.

"He shall never have her, Fred; he never shall, by—"

Fred was startled. It was the first time Paul Dalrymple had let the demon come in his presence; the first insight he ever had of the Evil One's share in that intense and terrible nature.

"Well," said Fred, who was master of fact to an

exasperating degree, "if you can win her, do; but I should not advise you to try. John Lenmore is not a man to be trifled with."

Dalrymple was silent in bitter thought.

"I promised you an introduction to Liz, and you shall have it." Fred went on; "but it must be out of doors. Mr. Dacre does not care to make friends."

"Will you keep that promise, Fred?"

"I will!"

The other wrung his hand.

"When was this engagement made?"

"Very recently, and there is no danger of its fulfilment yet. My uncle has only sanctioned it on condition that Jack Lenmore will be making four hundred a-year before he takes Liz to be his wife, and I think his hair is likely to be gray before he makes that out of the law."

"I think so too, Fred; and I am glad he is going in for law, as he must study in London. I know what his fate will be there. Hope will fade into disappointment; disappointment will drive him into dissipation, and then farewell to him."

"That's a cheerful picture!" said Fred; "but we shall see. Keep on thinking so if you get any consolation from it, but I tell you Jack Lenmore is not the man to fail in anything."

"You will give me a fair chance?"

"Yes. Jack Lenmore will be gone to London in a few days, and when I am out riding with the girls you can meet us. I don't think you will get on with Mildred, but we shall see."

We shall see here the beginning and the end of Fred's philosophy. It did not strike him that he was doing anything treacherous towards John Lenmore by giving Dalrymple the promised introduction; he liked Lenmore very well, but Paul Dalrymple had a strange fascination over him.

John Lenmore went to London in a few days as he had arranged. Will, when he heard of his intentions, said it was just like Jack, and went to fetch every shilling of the money he had stored up to put into Jack's pocket, and he was deeply grieved because Jack would not have it.

"But you will want it, Jack," he said, with his big affectionate hand on his brother's shoulder. "You must live like a gentleman in chambers as you call them."

"So I shall, Will. Father has paid my entrance expenses and my first two years' rent. He will allow me a hundred a-year till I am in practice, and Mr. Dacre has given me the necessary introductions; so you see I have plenty."

"Well, but Jack, you'll want more than that?"

"If I do, Will, I shall ask you for it."

"But you'll take something now?"

"When you come to London you shall buy me a big pipe, that I can smoke while I ponder over legal mysteries, and if I want any money I will let you know."

Will went out whistling rather sadly and put his bag of money away, hoping that Jack would want it some day. He took Mildred Dacre into his confidence and told her how deeply he should feel the coming separation.

"Jack's going away!" he said, sorrowfully; "and we have been together ever since he was born. I never did think Jack would go away from the old place. He says he must make a position for Lizzie Amory's sake; and here we are getting more out of the farm every year. I always meant that he should share and share alike with me."

"You are a good, honest-hearted fellow," said Mildred, comforting the giant with the clasp of her hand and the sympathy of her face; "but you do not comprehend everything."

"So they all tell me," said Will; "but I know I think more than they suppose I do, and when Jack's gone the old place won't seem half so much like home; you won't come so often as you do now."

"Yes I shall, Will."

"Well, if you do, it won't be because you care for me. I never could play, and sing, and talk as Jack does, so I don't expect people to care for me like they do for him."

"Whoever likes you, Will, likes you for yourself."

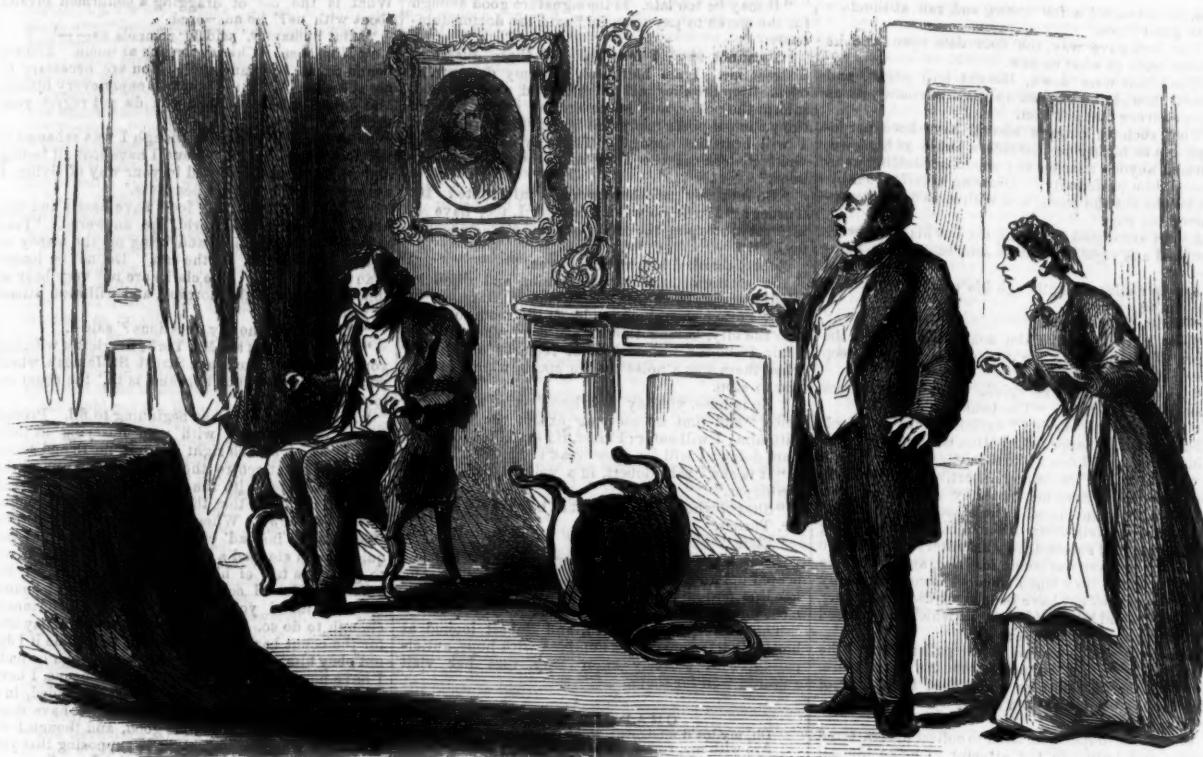
"Yes, but not as Lizzie Amory likes Jack. Nobody ever did and I don't suppose anybody ever will—I am different somehow."

"We are all born to be loved by someone," said Mildred, gravely; "and your time will come some day."

"We are all born to be loved by someone," repeated Will; "but sometimes it's the wrong someone, and what then?"

Mildred had no answer to give, but she echoed the speaker's sigh, thinking of Fred Amory, she could not help admitting that there was much truth in William Lenmore's bit of philosophy, simple as it was.

(To be continued)



[THE OUTRAGE DISCOVERED.]

YORKE SCARLETT;
OR,
THE MILLIONAIRE.

By the Author of "Evander," "Scarlet Berries," "Heart's Content," &c.

CHAPTER XV.

Think nought a trifl, though it small appear :
Small sands the mountain, moments make the year,
And times life.

THOROUGHLY overwhelmed by the weight of the misfortune which had overtaken him, Robert Yorke Scarlett remained silent for some time. Count Jarnac took no notice apparently of him, but when he made the slightest movement the count's hand grasped the little pistol tighter and his keen lynx-like eyes glittered and scintillated with a vengeful fire, ominous and warning.

Jarnac smoked one cigar after another with perfect indifference, and still Robert did not move.

At length the count exclaimed :

"The time for reflection is past and that for action has arrived. Sign!"

Robert saw there was no help for him, but a panic fear possessed him which paralysed his faculties.

Jarnac rose and threw the end of his cigar into the fire-place, where the rapidly dying embers were smouldering with that peculiar crackling sound, emitted by coals losing their heat.

He then walked straight up to Robert, and placing the pistol to his forehead, said, a second time :

"Sign!"

His voice was cold, hard, and sepulchral.

Robert started at the touch of the cold steel, and the contact of the muzzle with his flesh seemed to galvanise him into life.

Jarnac took him by the arm, and he walked mechanically to the table. A pen was ready to his hand, which he grasped with trembling fingers and wrote as the count dictated.

The signature of the Foreign Minister was one easy to imitate, and Robert did it with a marvellous exactitude, more the result of accident than design. Indeed, he more resembled a machine than an animated being, and seeing the signature before him he copied it like an automaton.

"That is well," cried the count, triumphantly, as he dried the ink upon some blotting paper, and folding the document in half, placed it in his pocket-book.

There was a spacious arm-chair in the room, in which he forced Robert to sit. From his coat he

produced a coil of rope with which he had provided himself, and which enabled him to bind his victim securely. A gag was next inserted in his mouth, and the nefarious outrage was complete.

"My dear fellow," he exclaimed, in a mocking tone, "it would have been best for you to have given me the ten thousand I required when I first asked for it; much unpleasantness would have been saved you, and I should have been spared all this trouble. It is, I assure you, distasteful in the extreme to me to have to use harsh measures with a gentleman."

Robert looked at him with an expression of terrible hatred, but he was unable to say anything.

Count Jarnac now took the key out of the door, and, letting himself out, locked it on the outside.

Closing the front door as noiselessly as he had glided downstairs, he found himself in the street.

"Half-past five, and the bank opens at ten," he said, as he looked at his watch.

In Piccadilly he saw a cab, and was driven to his residence, which was now in the west central district; but he did not retire to rest; there was no sleep for him that night.

With Robert the hours passed very slowly.

If the cheque were presented there was no doubt that it would be paid, for the clerks knew Robert as well as the private secretary of the minister. They had seen many cheques filled up in his handwriting, and, moreover, this was made payable to him. The minister's secretary had written his name accurately; it was, indeed, a fac-simile, and the count had laid his plans with such consummate skill that there was absolutely no difficulty in his obtaining the money.

Robert had, by his compliance, saved his life, but he had lost his honour.

If he related all the circumstances attendant upon the compulsory forgery, the tale was such a wild one that he feared no one would believe him.

High as the opinion was which the Foreign Minister had of him, he could not hope that he would pardon a forgery which robbed him of a sum of such enormous magnitude. Rich as he undoubtedly was, he could not afford to lose ten thousand pounds without being seriously inconvenienced.

Perhaps the officers of justice would be at his lodgings before he could make his escape, and flight meant the renunciation of Flora, the abandonment of the career that had opened so auspiciously before him, and utter ruin and disgrace. The fact of his being found bound might tell in his favour, but most people would agree that it was the act of an accomplice.

Turn his thoughts in what direction he would he could find little consolation.

A handsome ormolu clock on the mantelpiece chimed the hours and half hours. Nothing was heard save the monotonous tick!—tack! of the time-piece or the occasional scampering of a mouse behind the wainscoting.

At half-past eight he heard the servant in the passage as usual knocking at his bedroom door and setting down the can of hot water.

After that people ascended and descended the stairs; all was life and motion; the daily work had begun.

Wearily passed the time now, and the unhappy man kept his eyes riveted upon the clock.

Ten sounded on the melodious bell with which the timepiece was furnished.

At that hour the bank opened.

He pictured to himself the clerks as he had often seen them, coming in one by one, or in twos and threes, hanging up their hats and great-coats, and taking their several positions.

Presently there was a knocking for the second time at his bedroom door, by the servant, beginning to wonder at his not ringing for breakfast. It was known that he had gone to a ball the night before, and when she received no answer she went to the sitting-room door and tried to open it, thinking that he was tired and wanted to sleep longer than usual.

Her surprise was great indeed when she found she was unable to open it. Mr. Scarlett had never been known to lock his sitting-room door before, and after several ineffectual attempts she went away.

The silence alarmed her. Was there something wrong? With this impression she went to the landlord and informed him of the unusual circumstance. He was of her opinion, and together they went to the bedroom first.

The door opened easily enough, but it could be seen at a glance that the bed had not been slept in, and that Robert had not entered it since he dressed for the ball. His clothes were all in disorder, as he had left them, but those he wore when in evening dress were conspicuous only by their absence.

"He must have gone to sleep in the sitting-room and locked the door," thought the landlord.

Acting upon this supposition, he called him by name through the key-hole. He kicked violently at the door, and rattled it by shaking the handle with all his force.

As well might he have tried to rouse the dead, or wake the seven sleepers.

Being an energetic man, who did not stick at tri-

flies, he retreated a few paces, and ran at the door with great force.

The lock gave way, the door flew open, and he started back at what he saw.

The blinds were down, the gas still alight, and Robert, bound and gagged in the arm-chair, just as Count Jarnac had left him.

That such an outrage should have been perpetrated in so highly respectable a house as his own, without anyone hearing any sound or scuffling astonished him profoundly. Drawing a knife from his pocket, he cut the cords, and with some difficulty removed the gag.

Robert attempted to spring up, but his limbs were cramped and rigid, so that he sank back again, helpless.

But he could speak, though his voice was parched and hoarse.

"Water!" he gasped.

They hurriedly gave him some in a tumbler, the servant holding it to his lips, and he took a deep draught.

"Quick! quick!" he cried, when his utterance was restored to him. "The bank!"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the landlord. "How has this happened? Mine is a highly respectable house, and I don't like these things occurring."

"To the bank!" screamed Robert, almost frenzied; "oh, they could save me, and they will not go!"

He could say no more. The blood rushed to his head, and he fell down insensible. The meeting with Flora, and subsequently the interview with the Count Jarnac was too much for him, and overcame him just at the time when freedom accompanied by ability to act, would have been most useful to him.

They carried him to his bed, on which they placed him, while a doctor was sent for.

The medical man examined the patient, heard the extraordinary circumstances attending his seizure, and thinking his faintness was caused by a flow of blood to the head, bled him copiously.

This relieved him.

When able to speak, he tried to collect his scattered senses, and failing in the attempt to make himself coherent and intelligible, he sank back on the pillows and cried like a child.

The doctor administered an alcoholic in small doses, as the best remedy for the weakness he displayed, and he had the satisfaction of rapidly seeing his patient recover strength.

"My dear, good sir," said Robert, seizing the doctor's hand with an eager grasp, "you can save me if you will."

"From what?" asked the doctor.

"From infamy worse than death. A scoundrel came to my room last night, and confronted me after my return from the Duke of Woburn's; he placed a revolver at my head, and threatened me with instant death if I did not forgo the signature of Lord — to a cheque for a large amount."

"Lord — the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs?"

"The same. To save my life, I consented. I do not know how I contrived to do it, but it was done. The ruffian's influence prevailed, and I have forged Lord —'s name for ten thousand pounds to a cheque payable to bearer. The draft is made payable to me, by the fiendish ingenuity of my enemy, and my name is well known at the bank, because I am one of the Minister's private secretaries."

"What is the name of the bank?"

"The Union, Princes Street Branch, City."

"Who is your enemy?"

"He calls himself the Count Jarnac."

The doctor was an aged man, nearly sixty, a man of the world, and accustomed to command himself, but at the utterance of this name, he turned pale, all the strength deserted his limbs, and he was obliged to cling to the bedstead for support.

"Jarnac," he said, "Oh! at last, at last. Revenge is sweet, very sweet, though it come after long years. The retribution of heaven is sure, though it may be tardy."

"Do you know the count?" asked Robert, with trembling impatience.

"My name, sir, is Turner," answered the doctor, "and I have practised as a surgeon for more than thirty years. When I was young and prosperous, happy in the love of a beautiful wife, this fiend in human shape, stole into my earthly paradise, robbed me of my hard-earned savings, under a specious pretext, and ran away with my daughter, then a child."

"Was her name Elsie?"

"It was; my mother was of German extraction. Elsie was her name, and we christened the child after her."

"I could not ask why you hate the man," said Robert, "after the history you have related to me, but I conjure you, without any further conversation, to hasten to the bank and stop the cheque."

"It may be too late. Is the signature good enough for the clerks to pay upon it?" said the doctor dubiously.

"I cannot say; I fear so. All these questions distract me. I am half mad. Go, my dear sir, at once. Stop the cheque if not presented, and if cashed, inform the police, and let telegrams be sent to all the principal ports to prevent his leaving the country. I will bear the expense. There is money in my writing desk in the next room, and my cheque book."

"Do not say another word," interrupted Dr. Turner; "I will do what I can, for I, too, have an interest in stopping the career of this nefarious scoundrel."

Robert thanked him with his eyes. His emotion again overcame him, and when he tried to speak, the effort nearly choked him.

Dr. Turner was about to leave the room to hurry into the city, having thoroughly comprehended the affair from the few and brief remarks of Robert, when there was a noise on the stairs, which caused him to stop.

"He is here, you say he is here," cried a woman's voice, "and that no stranger except the doctor is with him; I will enter; I must, if I am killed for what I am doing; I will for once break my fetters."

"It is she," said Robert, in a voice a little above a whisper.

"She; of whom do you speak?" hoarsely demanded Dr. Turner.

"Elsie."

At this moment the door opened, and Elsie appeared upon the threshold, her face pale as marble, her lips parted, and her demeanour exhibiting the most intense agitation.

The doctor, the landlord, and Robert looked at her with amazement, not unmixed with hope, anticipating, they scarcely knew why, that her visit augured well for them.

CHAPTER XVI.

Oh, my low'd mistress! whose enchantments still Are with me, round me, where I will—
It is for thee, for thee alone I seek—
The paths of glory—to light up thy cheek
With warm approval—in that gentle look,
To read my praise, as in an angel's book,
And think all toils rewarded, when from thee
I gain a smile, worth immortality! — Moore.

"I AM followed. He is pursuing me, do not let him come up, for he will kill me," continued Elsie, almost breathlessly.

"To whom do you allude?" asked Robert.

"He scarcely knew whether to regard her as a friend or foe, though we have said he hoped the former.

"The Count Jarnac," she answered; "the man whom I have led you to believe is my father; I know different now, for my mother, who is on her deathbed through the effects of his tyranny and brutality, has told me the truth; had I not known this, I do not think I should have dared to act as I have done to-day."

The doctor quietly left the room without his absence being noticed.

He had a motive for thus acting, which will become apparent in due time.

"What have you done?" said Robert, who was on thorns of expectation and anxiety.

"This morning, the count — I call him so to prevent suspicion, though he has no right to the title," said Elsie, "told me to go with him into the city."

"To the bank?"

"Yes, he gave me a cheque as we went along, and he said that I should receive ten thousand pounds for it, and when the clerk asked me how I would have the money, I was to reply in one hundred notes of one hundred pounds value each."

"Did you get the money?" cried Robert, whose excitement increased as this interesting narrative went on.

"I did not," answered Elsie, "for, having glanced at the cheque, I saw your name."

"Do you now meet Mr. Scarlett?" I said.

"I met him last night at his lodgings in Duke Street, St. James's," the count replied, "and by dint of a little management got this out of him, which will enable me to go to St. Petersburg, comfortably. You will go with me, but your mother, who is dying, may stop in England, and get the parish to bury her. That is one advantage in the excellent poor law of this charmingly free country. The parishes bury their pauper dead."

"My heart was burning with a fierce resentment. I contrived to contain my rage and hatred. Fortunately, he did not read my determination in my face."

"It will be pleasant to quit London," I said, "though I should not like to leave poor mamma."

"The doctor told me that she could not recover.

What is the use of dragging a confirmed invalid about with us?" he answered.

"But humanity," said I, "compels us—"

"Nonsense! Charity begins at home. You are bound to me, body and soul. You are necessary to my schemes. With me you will enjoy every luxury, and I will take care that you do not regret your decision."

"Very well," replied I, "though I was ashamed of my dissimulation. I believe I have lost all feeling since I have been initiated in your way of living. I am growing thoroughly heartless."

"That is right. Only fools have hearts and talk about feeling in this world," he answered. "Take the cheque, my darling, and bring me the money in notes. I will wait in the cab. Do not be longer than you can help. The clerks are not very busy at this early hour in the morning, and will soon attend to you."

"If they ask me any questions?" said I.

"Tell them you are Mr. Yorke Scarlett's wife, and you have come from Duke Street, St. James's, where you live, because your husband is ill," the count rejoined.

"Already the city was beginning to fill. Princes Street was crowded with men hurrying to their offices, which branch right and left, north and south, from that great centre the bank. I got out of the cab mingled with the throng. I could see when I turned my head, that the count was looking out of the cab window. When I felt myself secure from observation, instead of entering the bank, I ran quickly and stopped a passing cab, telling the driver to go at the top of his speed to Duke Street, St. James's. He did so. I stopped at several houses before I found you, but at last I was fortunate enough to do so. I am here at the risk of my life, for the count has often threatened to kill me if I did not obey him. But he will follow me when he finds I have not been to the bank with the cheque, I have no doubt. You will protect me," she added, in a pathetic voice, "will you not, sir? I have done this, as I believed, for your good, and though I do not know whether I am right in supposing that you would like to have the cheque again, I —"

"Where is it?" cried Robert, loudly. "Have you the cheque? Give it me—oh, give it me! Quick! Let me feel my eyes upon it!"

"Here it is," replied Elsie, drawing a piece of coloured paper from her pocket and handing it to Robert. He glanced at it.

It was the veritable document which Count Jarnac had compelled him to sign, and which would have ruined him if it had once been cashed.

"Saved! saved!" he exclaimed, with a burst of hysterical laughter.

With an eager fury that had a savour of madness about it, he tore the hateful cheque into at least twenty pieces, and cast them from him as if they had been so many vipers.

"Thank Heaven," he said, in a more subdued tone, "my honour is unstained. I need cherish no further fear. Elsie, I thank you; I would say much; just now—now I am not myself—a wild, joyous mad delirious; the reaction has set in—another time."

She saw him fall back at its close; the blood receded from his cheeks, and he was like one dead.

Rushing forward she would have helped him. The landlord restrained her generous efforts.

"Leave him," he said. "It is only exhausted nature following its course. He will be better when he comes to himself. Sit down, my dear young lady, and do not excite yourself, or you will be imitating his example."

He forced her into a chair. Scarcely had he done so when a noise was heard on the stairs.

A man's voice was heard also, and a quick step could be distinguished ascending the staircase.

"Don't trouble yourself," said the voice, "the young lady is my daughter; I recognise her from your description, and she expects me. That will do. Mr. Scarlett is my friend. I know my way."

The next moment he was in the room, and with a bland accent, which was belied by the tigerish glare of his eye, he said:

"Elsie, my dear, did you execute the little commission I entrusted you with?"

"No, I did not," she replied, boldly, for the landlord stood between her and the Count Jarnac. As for Robert he was incapable of moving.

"You have it with you, then," resumed the count, with a smile which showed his white, gleaming teeth. "Show it me."

Elsie pointed to the floor.

At his feet—the count was treading on them—were the fragments of the cheque which he had dared and risked so much to obtain.

He stooped down to examine them more closely. His eye caught sight of the colour of the paper, the

writing, the figures, all disjointed, but one by one making up a whole, which though actually incomplete, nevertheless enabled him to comprehend what had happened.

To make sure, he sank on his knees and turned the little bits of coloured paper over and over.

Presently he rose, and though pale before, in those few minutes he had grown very white.

"Traitor!" he hissed between his clinched teeth. "You shall pay dearly for this. You have betrayed me into the hands of my enemies, but you shall pay the penalty. Come with me."

Elsie, poor, weak, timid creature, shrank into a corner, and holding up her hands deprecatingly, said, with an appealing glance to the landlord:

"Pray protect me. Do not let him take me away, as I will kill me. He has threatened to do so, as I told you, and he is quite capable of doing so. See how he is treating my dying mother, whom he has wronged so cruelly."

"Stand on one side!" cried Jarnac, raising his arm menacingly.

The landlord was not a man of war, but all his manhood came to his aid on this occasion.

He could not see Elsie torn away from his protection, and dragged as it were in slavery, without striking a blow in her defense.

"You shall not touch her," he replied. "If she goes with you, it shall be of her own free will."

With one blow of his fist, Jarnac, without any further parleying, disposed of the landlord by knocking him into the fire-place, where he lay panting and groaning, half-stunned.

"Come with me. You shall and must!" exclaimed Jarnac, striding over the landlord's prostrate body and seizing Elsie by the wrist.

"Oh! no, no, no!" she answered. "I will not harm you. Please leave me here. I will get my own living. You shall not be troubled by me. Go abroad, as you said you would. I will see to my poor mother. You have nothing to fear from me if you will not harm me."

"Nothing to fear!" he said, in an ironical tone. "You have done all the harm you can. What more do you wish to accomplish? After infinite thought and labour, I had made, as I thought, a small fortune, and you go and knock it all down by your thoughtlessness, or shall I say, treachery."

Elsie strove hard to release herself from his grasp, but it was one of iron, and she could do little.

"You shall come with me, if I have to drag you step by step to my cab which is in the street. Fool! do you think that the spendthrift scamp who is lying on that bed cares for you. He loves another, who has refused him because of his unworthiness. I tell you he can never be yours. Come!"

A deep flush suffused Elsie's countenance.

"I did not think that he did love me, or ever could, after the exposure that took place at Chelsea, nor did I love him. You do me great injustice by the suspicion."

"Are we to waste an eternity of valuable time through your idiotic prattling?" cried Jarnac, who saw the prostrate landlord exhibiting signs of returning consciousness.

Tightening his grip, which was already like that of a tiger, he squeezed her wrist until the pain of his pressure made her wince.

"Do not hurt me," she said.

Disregarding her appeal, he dragged her savagely to the door, and placed his arms round her waist, intending to drag her downstairs.

The door opened just as he reached it, and he was spared the trouble of releasing one arm and turning the handle.

To his consternation a man followed by two policemen, who stood like two pillars in the doorway, barred his egress.

The man was Dr. Turner.

He advanced until he stood face to face with Jarnac, who released his grasp of Elsie, who immediately sank at his feet, too terrified to move.

"You miserable scoundrel!" exclaimed the doctor, "we have met at last. I can see that you know me by the colour of your face, and you do well to fear me, because I am, as I have a right to be, and always have been, your determined enemy. I knew you once as a friend. You came to my house, villain, and called yourself an Englishman. Your knowledge of the language deceived me, and I received you not only as a countryman, but as a friend. Then you called yourself William Long. You stole my wife's affections from me, after creeping like a snake into my confidence, and you destroyed my domestic happiness, dastardly wretch that you were, and are. Worse than all, you took my little daughter with you, and I fear that you have contaminated her by your base example. I have heard of you. From William Long you became the Count Jarnac; but such have been the pressing nature of my professional engagements, and such your continued

changes of residence, that I have not been able to expose you as I could wish. It was as long that I knew you, and that name has ever been engraven in my memory, and associated with all that is vile and bad."

During the delivery of this speech Jarnac was visibly perturbed.

He saw that it was impossible for him to take Elsie with him.

The constables would have prevented that, and they were possibly armed with authority to arrest him. His crimes had been numerous enough, and the police had long been searching for him.

His outrage of the preceding night was quite sufficient for them to act upon, and he scarcely knew what to do. It seemed to him that the end had come.

"I cursed you when you robbed me of my wife and child and desolated my home," the doctor went on, "and I have prayed night and day that you might meet with your deserts."

"A very Christian prayer, certainly," Jarnac had the hardihood to say, with a sneer. "Do you wonder that it has not been answered?"

"It is answered. You only leave this room as a prisoner," said Dr. Turner.

Jarnac looked round.

To escape from the window was impossible. Placing his hand in his pocket he, with lightning-like rapidity, drew forth the little pistol we have before described.

Raising it to his forehead, he pulled the trigger, and fell bleeding to the floor.

The policemen rushed forward and found a hole perforated by the bullet underneath the left temple.

Dr. Turner stooped down and placed his hand upon the heart.

It had ceased to beat!

The wily adventurer was dead! At last he had paid the penalty of his crimes, and his sins had come home to him.

"Heaven rest his soul; I bear him no enmity now," said the doctor, dragging the counterpane from the bed, and throwing it over him.

Elsie had fainted.

He took her in his arms and carried her into the adjoining room, and laid her on a couch, assisted by the landlord, who had recovered from the knock-down blow he had received a short time before.

Elsie was hysterical. She went from one fit into another; but her father—Dr. Turner—watched her with the utmost tenderness and skill.

She became calm at last, and he told her the truth, and begged her not to care for the death of the wretched suicide in the next room, who richly deserved his fate.

He explained that he was her father, and told her the story of his wrongs.

"See mamma before she dies," was the only answer Elsie made. "I am well and strong again now. See mamma: forgive her as you hope to be forgiven."

Dr. Turner covered his face with his hands. He was strongly moved.

Oh, how he had loved that woman in the years gone by, and how basely she had treated him. He had worshipped her, and she had left his roof through the blandishments of that lying villain, who had come to him under the name of Long; insinuated himself into his confidence, and infamously betrayed him.

"We all stand in need of forgiveness in this world," said Elsie, seeing that he did not reply; "all mortals are liable to err. Forgive mamma, and you will smooth her path to heaven. It is remorse, added to the effects of ill-treatment, that is killing her."

"I will come with you to my poor, misguided wife, and I will pardon her: Heaven knows I need pardon and mercy myself," replied the doctor. "Yes, yes, I will assure her of my forgiveness, though she blighted my life, and made me what I am and have been,—a wretched, solitary creature; living for myself alone, and hating all mankind."

They quitted the house together.

Robert was not himself again for some hours, and when he heard that the Count Jarnac was dead, he was amazed.

Still, the fact of the cheque being restored to him, and torn up, made his heart light. His honour was safe, and the fearful consequences of the compulsory forgery were averted.

An inquest was held on Jarnac, and the jury, with the merciful consideration usual in such cases nowadays, returned a verdict of "Suicide while in a state of unsound mind."

Robert's nerves had received a shock from which they did not recover immediately.

He applied for leave of absence for a short period, and it was readily granted him.

Dr. Turner had visited his unhappy wife, who was indeed dying. He was with her to the last, and she

had the inexpressible satisfaction of knowing that he forgave her for having been weak enough to yield to the blandishments of a villain.

When the funeral was over, Dr. Turner took his daughter to his arms. He had previously told her all, and his recital simply corroborated what her wretched mother had confessed in her last illness.

"You have escaped contamination, my dear child," he said; "and you are worthy of my love and esteem. We will live together, and endeavour by mutual care to make each other happy."

Elsie was delighted at being far from the atmosphere of intrigue and crime in which she had lived so long. Dr. Turner sold his practice, and bought a small cottage near Kew Gardens, to which place he invited Robert to spend a few days.

He came, having previously told his old friends, Lord Elphinstone and Dr. Copeland, where he was going to spend the holiday his leave of absence gave him.

They drove down to see him, and he thrilled them to the marrow of their bones as he related the events of that terrible night when he was in Jarnac's power, and the agony that followed in the morning.

"I suppose you will wind up by marrying the heroine of this little romance," said Dr. Copeland, with a searching glance.

Lord Elphinstone became grave.

They both seemed to have a secret interest in his reply.

"You ought to know, doctor," he answered, with sincerity, "that my heart is wholly engaged to another. I began by trifling with Flora's priceless affection. Now I am meeting with my deserts. I love her madly, and shall never know any peace until I have obtained forgiveness for the foolish past, and she is mine."

"If that can never happen, you may turn your attention to Elsie," Dr. Copeland went on.

"Impossible. If I cannot realize my dream of happiness I will remain a bachelor for her sake. I respect and esteem Elsie, but she can never be more to me than a friend."

He said this with such emphasis that it was impossible to doubt his truthfulness.

The conversation had taken place in a room on the ground floor. Dr. Turner was not present; but to Robert's amazement, there had been one more listener than he bargained for.

A curtain near the window was drawn back, and Elsie, radiant with smiles, stepped out.

"Oh! Mr. Scarlet," she said, laughing all the time; "you bad man, you are determined to break my heart. What shall I do?"

"I did not know you were there, Elsie," he replied; "nor did I guess that my words would grieve you. If I had done so I must have said them all the same, for I do not wish my friends to labour under a misconception."

"It is only a joke on my part," said Elsie. "Your regard for me is similar to mine for you—the same as brother and sister. Nothing more."

Robert took her by the hand, and leading her to Lord Elphinstone, exclaimed:

"If you want a wife, my old friend, I can only say that Elsie is the best and truest and loveliest you could find."

"Except Flora," put in Elsie, blushing, and smiling mischievously.

"Always excepting Flora," said Robert, accepting the correction. "Elsie is worthy of a coronet, and if you take my advice you will engage her before somebody else runs off with her before your eyes."

"If I were twenty years younger," said Dr. Copeland, "I would enter the lists with you."

"A rival already," laughed Robert.

Lord Elphinstone did not know what to say. He had abstractedly taken one of Elsie's hands in his, and he stood looking in her face, when to relieve her embarrassment, Dr. Turner entered.

"A merry party," he cried. "Come for a walk in the gardens before lunch?"

"With all my heart," rejoined Robert, who led the way.

Elsie and Lord Elphinstone followed. The two doctors brought up the rear, walking side by side.

"Are all the arrangements complete?" asked Dr. Copeland.

"All," rejoined Turner.

"And they are in the gardens?"

"Yes, in a quiet, deserted part, near the pagoda, where no one will see them."

"Excellent!" said Copeland, much pleased.

It was a fine day for the time of year, though the flowers and shrubs were not yet in the beauty of their summer splendour.

Robert was joined by the two professional gentlemen, who chatted pleasantly as they walked up the broad paths that led to the greenhouses, and so on up the grass plot leading to the Richmond end of the gardens.

As for Elsie and Lord Elphinstone, they followed their leaders blindly, not caring whither they went, for they were making love to one another in the most approved fashion, his lordship having taken a great liking to Elsie the first time he saw her.

When the gentlemen got nearly to the end of the promenade, Robert suggested turning round.

He was about to do so when a young lady, leaning on the arm of an elderly gentleman, approached.

"Flora!" exclaimed Robert.

It was she; more lovely, if possible, than before, radiant, blushing, smiling—coming like a beautiful vision from heaven to glad his eyes.

"I must speak to her. Dr. Copeland, you will plead for me and say that I am changed. The past is over, never to return. I love her. You have heard me say so. Tell her that, and Mr.—Mr. Margrave—there it is again, that wonderful likeness—my old delusion; I could swear it was my father."

Flora stood still.

Mr. Margrave advanced and stopped before Robert, who trembled like a leaf.

"Robert Yorke Scarlett!" he exclaimed, in a firm, clear voice, "do you know me?"

"If my father were not dead, if I had not seen his corpse and been present at his funeral, I should say that you were he," answered Robert.

"My boy," said Mr. Margrave, "you shall be deceived no longer. I am your father. My death was a stratagem resorted to in order to save you from destruction. I thought you were not radically vicious, and that experience would make you a respectable member of society. Pardon the subterfuge. Dreadful diseases require desperate remedies, and your conduct was so bad that I could deal with you in no ordinary way."

Robert was astounded.

"But the death?" he said, scarcely able even now to credit the evidence of his senses.

"Was cleverly managed. A dead body, something resembling me, was procured."

"How am I to explain the grief of Flora, the sorrow of Dr. Copeland?"

"They were accomplices, and chosen ones, too. We have been in league throughout."

"Then I have not been haunted. The man servant, the horseman, the traveller, the man in the sewers, the money-lender—all—all—were personated by you?" said Robert.

"All! I had not been for thirty years on the stage, and considered the most versatile actor of my day, without knowing how to play a part, however difficult. For your sake, Robert, I have played in this comedy; it is the last part I shall ever be cast for, but now your reformation is assured, and you have an honourable career before you, I hope to live many years yet, to behold your prosperity, and hear my name honourably spoken of, instead of being associated with all that is disgraceful and repulsive."

Turning to Flora, he took her hand and put it in that of his son.

"Now that I am assured that my ward's happiness will be safe with Robert Yorke Scarlett, gentleman, I give to him that hand which I took care he should not have when he was Robert Yorke Scarlett, good-for-nothing, spendthrift and rascal. May Heaven bless you both. Now go and talk it all over by yourselves. Flora will explain anything that I have left obscure. Be happy while you can, for happiness is scarce enough in this world. What are you looking at, sir? Can't an old man have a tear in his eyes, without—without—impertinent interference? Go away at once; I want to talk to my old friend, Copeland."

The veteran actor had indeed played his part well.

It was some time before Robert could realise all that had been revealed to him.

Flora told him how dearly she had always loved him, and longed to come to him. It was she who had nursed him through his long illness, consequent upon his accident, but though she loved him, the sage counsels of his father and Dr. Copeland kept her away from him, until they felt that he was an altered man, and one to whom they could entrust her future welfare.

He felt full of affection and thankfulness to his kind friends who had worked so hard to save him from destruction.

All that was obscure became clear as daylight, and he found that his father still had money. The estate at Kessingland was still in the family, because he had himself bought it, and all the harm done was the wasting of about sixty thousand pounds in sowing his wild oats.

Our story is ended now.

Flora and Robert were married, and the latter grew in favour with his influential patrons every year. All his holidays were spent at Newry Hall, where the old actor still resided—and never once did

he show the smallest symptoms of relapsing into his former state of dissipation.

At the same church and time Lord Elphinstone married Elsie, much to Dr. Turner's regret, for he did not want to leave his daughter, but he lives with them at a large house in town, and she is kindness itself to him in his old age.

Dr. Copeland spends his time in visiting first one and then another of his friends. Sometimes he is at Newry Hall, then with Robert, in town, or with the Elphinstones. All like him, and he is never tired of talking about the various episodes in the famous actor's last piece, which he named "The Dread Phantom."

THE END.

LEIGHTON HALL.

CHAPTER XVIII.

These two had been together from the first; They might have been together to the last.

GEORGIE gave up the confirmation then and there, and after sitting silent a few moments, arose and went to John, and putting her arms around his neck, cried aloud upon his shoulder, and called him the best brother in the world, and wished she was half as good as he, and a great deal more which John took at its fair valuation. He was used to her moods, and knew exactly how to prize them. Still in this instance he had been a little hard on her, she thought, and so he kissed her at last, and said he was not angry with her, and bade her go to bed lest she should be ill on the morrow.

She stayed a week after that, and when at last she went away, her diamond pin, earrings, bracelets, and two finger rings of diamonds and emeralds lay in the snow-window of a jeweller's shop where they bought such articles; and in Annie's hand, when parting with her, she thrust a paper, which contained the sum of one hundred pounds and the words, "To help make the first payment on the new house."

Annie held her as nothing less than an angel of goodness and generosity, while John said to himself:

"There are noble traits in Georgie, after all," and felt that the house was a sure thing.

Georgie Burton's proud head was not one on which the bishop's hands were laid. Aunt Burton, who had gone for a week or so to her country house, and taken Georgie with her, had urged her to it, and the rector; and when Georgie gave her as a reason for holding back that she was "not good enough," the rector said she had set her standard far too high, while Aunt Burton wondered where the good were to be found if Georgie were not of the number, and cried softly during the ceremony because of her darling's humility. What Georgie felt no one knew. She sat very quietly through the service, with her veil dropped over her face, and only turned her head a little when Maude, who was among the candidates, went up to the altar. But when Roy Leighton, too, arose, and with a calm, peaceful expression upon his manly face, joined the group gathering in the aisle, she gave a start, and the long lashes which dropped upon her burning cheeks were moist with tears. She had not expected this of Roy. He was not one to talk much of his deeper feelings, and only his mother and the rector knew of the determination to lead a new and better life which had been growing within him ever since Charlie's death.

There was a slight stir perceptible all through the congregation as Roy went up and stood by Maude. "He was a member worth getting; at least he was sincere," even the cavillers at the holy rite thought among themselves, and when it was over, and he came down the aisle, all noted the expression of his face as of one who was in earnest and honest in what he had done. Georgie saw it too, and for a moment the justice of what John had said asserted itself to her mind, and in her heart she cried out: "Roy ought not to be deceived, and yet how could I tell him, even supposing—"

She did not finish the sentence, but she meant, "supposing he does ask me to be his wife."

And Georgie had again strong hopes that he would. He had seemed very glad to see her when she came up to Oakwood; had called on her every day, and shown in various ways how much he was interested in her. There was about her now a certain air of softness and humility very attractive to Roy, and he had half hoped that when he knelt at the altar, Georgie might be with him, and felt a little disappointed that she was not. So much as this he said to her that night, when, as usual, he called at Oakwood. They were all alone, and Georgie, of her own accord, had made some allusion to the morning service, when Roy spoke of his wish that she had been with him, and his disappointment that she was not. Georgie had borne a great deal that day, and lived a great deal in the dreadful past which she would so much like to have blotted

out. Her nerves were unstrung, and when Roy said to her so gently, and still in a sorry kind of way, "Why didn't you, Georgie?" she broke down entirely, and laying her head upon the table, cried for a moment like a child.

"Oh, Roy," she said at last, looking up at him with her dark eyes full of tears, "I did want to; did mean to; but I am not good enough, and I dared not. But I am so glad you did, so glad"—and she clasped her pretty hands in a kind of tragic manner—"for now you will teach me, won't you?"

Roy was but a man, and knew nothing of that recent scene with John, and Georgie was very beautiful to look upon, and seemed so softened and subdued that he felt a strange feeling throbbing in his heart, and would without doubt have proposed taking the fair penitent as his pupil for life if Maude had not just then come suddenly upon them and spoiled their tête-à-tête. Georgie's eyes were a little stormy now, but Maude did not pretend to notice it, and seated herself very unconcernedly before the fire, with her crocheting, thus putting to an end any plan Roy might have had in his mind with reference to Miss Georgie Burton.

Maude had scarcely seen Roy before, since her visit home, and she told him all about quaint Uncle Philip, who was his agent there, and of his niece, Miss Overton, the prettiest little creature, to whom she had given the pet name of "Dot," who was such a wee bit of a thing. And then the conversation turned upon Charlie, and Charlie's wife; and Maude asked if anything had yet been heard from her, or if Roy knew where she was. Roy did not, except that she was teaching and would not let him know of her whereabouts.

"How do you know she is teaching, then?" Georgie asked, a little sharply; and Roy replied, innocently enough:

"I know through an aunt of hers, to whom I wrote last Christmas, asking her to forward to her niece a box of jet, which I sent to Edna."

"Oh-h!" and Maude jumped as if she had been shot; then quickly recovering herself, she exclaimed: "That dreadful pin!" and put her hand to her collar, as if the cause of her agitation were there.

Maude had received an impression. Things were always coming to her, she was wont to say, and something had come to her now which made her quiver all over with excitement, and sent her at last to her own room, where she bounded about like a ball.

"I knew there was something queer about her all the time, but I never suspected that. Poor little Dot! how I must have hurt her feelings with my foolish talk of Charlie, if she really is his widow; and I know she is, for I remember now how interested she was in the Leightons, and how many questions she asked about Roy and his mother; and then that box of jet. I'm sure of it—perfectly sure; and, Dot, if I can ferret out a secret, I can keep one too; and if you don't want Roy to know where you are, he never shall from me."

Maude wrote to Edna that night, and told her everything about the Leightons which she thought would interest her, and then with feverish impatience waited for matters to develop, and for her next summer's vacation, when she meant to go again to visit her and satisfy herself.

After Maude's sudden exit from the room, Roy did not revive the conversation which her entrance had interrupted.

He was thinking of Edna, and Georgie's chance was lost again. But when in the spring he decided upon his trip to the continent, he half made up his mind to take Georgie Burton with him. He knew it would please his mother, and from all that had passed between himself and the lady, he felt that he was in some sort bound to make her his wife; and why wait any longer? She was at Oakwood now. She had left London earlier than usual, on the plea that town air did not agree with her as formerly: she felt tired, nevertheless, she told her aunt; who, ever ready to gratify her darling's slightest whim, consented to leave London at least a month earlier than usual, but never dreamed that the real cause of Georgie's pretended weariness was to be found in the pleasant little house where John Heyford was settling himself. Although constantly assuring herself that her fears were groundless, Georgie could not shake off the nervous dread that by John's presence the black page of her life might somehow come to life. She went several times, for she could not keep away, but she avoided meeting anyone who knew her, and would wonder what she was doing there. Still it was not so much through herself as through John that she dreaded recognition, and until he was fairly settled and at work it was better for her to be away, and so she went to Oakwood and saw Roy every day, and was so soft, and sweet, and pious, and interesting in her new rôle of half invalid, that Roy made up his mind, and started one morning to settle the important question. His route lay past the post-office, and

there he found the letter Edna had written in answer to his own.

He read it in the shadow of an old elm-tree, which grew by the roadside, and under which he reined his horse for a moment. There was nothing remarkable in it, nothing to startle one, either way, but it turned Roy's thoughts from Georgie for a time, and sent them after the frolicsome little girl whom he had once seen in the train, just about a year ago, and who was now his sister.

She wrote a very pretty hand, and she seemed so grateful for the few proofs of interest he had given her, that he wished so much he knew where she was. If he did, he believed he would take her, instead of Georgie; but not as his wife—he never thought of such a thing in connection with Edna—but as his sister, for such she really was. And so, with her letter in his hand, he sat thinking of her, while his horse fed upon the fresh grass by the fence, and feeling no check from bit or bridle, kept going further and further away, until, when Roy's reverie was ended, and he looked about for his horse, he saw him far down the road, in the direction of Leighton Hall, instead of Oakwood.

Roy started after him at once; but the horse did not care to be caught, and seeing his master coming, pricked up his ears and started for home, where Roy found him at last, standing quietly by the stable door, as if nothing had happened. That circumstance kept Roy from Georgie's side that day, and when on the morrow he saw her at his own house, he was guilty of experiencing a feeling of relief that he had not committed himself, and would have no one's luggage but his mother's and his own to look after.

He started early in June. Georgie felt such bitter pain in her heart as paled the roses on her cheek, and quenched some of the brightness of her eyes.

"Roy is lost to me for ever," she said to herself, with a great pang of disappointment in her heart.

Still, as long as he remained unmarried, there was hope; and though her youth was rapidly slipping away, she would rather wait on the slightest chance of winning Roy Leighton than give herself to another.

And so, that summer at Brighton, where she reigned a belle, she refused two very eligible offers; one from the young heir of a proud Manchester family, the other from a widower of sixty, with a million and a half of gold, and seven grown-up daughters.

(To be continued.)

THE SOUTH MIDLAND INSTITUTE OF MINING, CIVIL, AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS.—This society held one of their most successful meetings at their head-quarters in Wolverhampton. The business had reference chiefly to boiler explosions, upon which a paper was read by Mr. Bernard Peard Walker. The author contended that the supposition that boilers exploded from the overheating of plates was fallacious, delusive, and contrary to chemical principles. He dealt with the supposition of the spheroidal form of water under excessive heat, and said it was impossible for the water to assume that form in a boiler, however much it might be heated. He argued against the electric theory that electricity was produced by steam only as it escaped from a boiler. He thought, however, that electricity dangerously influenced the deposit of scale upon the inside of a boiler. Many explosions had been caused by the deposit of scale, which, preventing the water touching the plate, led to its being so weakened by overheating that it gave way beneath the pressure of steam. To prevent this, filter-beds should be used, for it is better to keep filth out of a boiler than to allow it to be put in and then clean it out. He held that the causes of boiler explosions were either the result of the miscalculation of their strength, or from the reduction of their original strength by the treatment to which they had been subjected in process of working. External corrosion he held to be the most prolific source of weakness, and maintained that efficient periodical inspection would go far to discover indications of mischief. The results were strikingly favourable alike in that and in the Manchester district, arising out of the vigilance of inspection associations. He quoted from records in *The Engineer* of experiments upon the strength of boilers, spoke of their great value to everyone concerned in the safe working of steam machinery, hoped the experiment would be continued, and suggested that ironmasters and others in that part of the kingdom might allow old boilers to be tested to the bursting point, in order still further to assist the investigations now being made in the checking of calculations which had been long in vogue, but which had lately been somewhat questioned. He must say, however, that some experiments that he and Mr. G. B. Marten had together made, went in the direction of confirming rather than disproving the accuracy of former calculations. The paper was admirably illustrated by a coloured diagram,

12ft. by 4ft., that had been prepared by Mr. Marten. The particulars published by Mr. Marten, in his "Records of Steam Boiler Explosions," Mr. Walker adverted to as conclusive of points which he advanced in the course of his paper; and Mr. Walker's views were yet further confirmed by models shown at the meeting by Mr. Marten, illustrative of explosions that have happened this year. The models will, in a complete state, made of copper, be shown at the engineers' *conversations* in Great George-street at the end of this year. Model No. 1 showed how a Cornish boiler had exploded through a corrosion in the bottom flues. No. 2 was that of a Lancashire boiler which had exploded through weakness, brought about by too frequent repairs to the shell. No. 3 showed the explosion of a plain cylindrical boiler in consequence of overheating, the water "kicking" through one boiler to another. No. 4 was the collapse of the tube of a Cornish boiler through weakness. No. 5 was a balloon boiler that had burst through corrosion of the angle-iron at the bottom. No. 6 was the explosion of a rag boiler used in paper making, and not for generating steam, illustrating how a disastrous explosion may result from the rupture of a vessel filled with steam only at 50 lb. pressure. No. 6 comprised three domestic boilers which had exploded through the stoppage of the pipes by frost, and leading to the conclusion that the danger might be prevented by having a circulating boiler exposed to the fire, on the principle adopted in the case of a glue-pot.

THE VELOCITY OF THOUGHT.

"As quick as thought" is a common proverb, and probably not a few persons feel very much inclined to regard the speed of mental operations as something entirely beyond our powers of measurement. Apart, however, from those minds which take their owners so long in making up because they are so great, rough experience clearly shows that ordinary thinking does take time; and as soon as mental processes are brought to work in connection with delicate instruments and exact calculations, it becomes obvious that the time they consumed was a matter for serious consideration. A well-known instance of this is the "personal equation" of the atmosphere. When a person, watching the movement of a star, makes a signal the instant he sees it, or the instant it seems to him to cross a certain line, it is found that a definite fraction of a second always elapses between the actual falling of the image of the star on the observer's eye and the making of the signal—a fraction, moreover, varying somewhat with different observers, and with the same observer under differing mental conditions.

Of late years considerable progress has been made towards an accurate knowledge of this mental time. A typical bodily action, involving mental effort, may be regarded as made up of three terms: of sensations travelling towards the brain, of processes thereby set up within the brain, and of resultant motor impulses travelling from the brain towards the muscles which are about to be used. Our first task is to ascertain how much time is consumed in each of these terms; we may afterwards try to measure the velocity of the various stages and parts into which each term may be further subdivided. The velocity of motor impulses is by far the simplest case of the three, and has already been made out pretty satisfactorily. We can assert, for instance, that in frogs a motor impulse, the message of the will to the muscle, travels at about the rate of 28 metres second, while in man it moves at about 33 metres.

The method by which this result is obtained may be described in its simplest form somewhat as follows:—The muscle which in the frog corresponds to the calf of the leg, may be prepared with about two inches of its proper nerve still attached to it. If a galvanic current be brought to bear on the nerve close to the muscle, a motor impulse is set up in the nerve, and a contraction of the muscle follows. Between the exact moment when the current breaks the nerve, and the exact moment when the muscle begins to contract, a certain time elapses. This time is measured in this way:—A blackened glass cylinder, made to revolve very rapidly, is fitted with two delicate levers, the points of which just touch the blackened surface at some little distance apart from each other. So long as the levers remain perfectly motionless, they trace on the revolving cylinder two parallel, horizontal, unbroken lines; and any movement of either is indicated at once by an upward (or downward) deviation from the horizontal line. These levers further are so arranged (as may readily be done) that the one lever is moved by the entrance of the very galvanic current which gives rise to the motor impulse in the nerve, and thus mark the beginning of that motor impulse; while the other is moved by the muscle directly this begins to contract, and thus marks the beginning of the muscular contraction.

Taking note of the direction in which the cylinder is revolving, it is found that the mark of the setting-up of the motor impulse is always some little distance ahead of the mark of the muscular contraction; it only remains to be ascertained to what interval of time that distance of space on the cylinder corresponds. Did we know the actual rate at which the cylinder revolves this might be calculated, but an easier method is to bring a vibrating tuning-fork, of known pitch, to bear very lightly side-ways on the cylinder, above or between the two levers. As the cylinder revolves, and the tuning-fork vibrates, the latter will mark on the former a horizontal line, made up of minute, uniform waves corresponding to the vibrations. In any given distance, as for instance in the distance between the two marks made by the levers, we may count the number of waves. These will give us the number of vibrations made by the tuning-fork in the interval; and knowing how many vibrations the tuning-fork makes in a second, we can easily tell to what fraction of a second the number of vibrations counted corresponds. Thus, if the tuning-fork vibrates 100 times a second, and in the interval between the marks of the two levers we count ten waves, we can tell that the time between the two marks, i.e., the time between the setting-up of the motor impulse and the beginning of the muscular contraction, was 1-10th of a second.

Having ascertained this, the next step is to repeat the experiment exactly in the same way, except that the galvanic current is brought to bear upon the nerve, not close to the muscle, but as far off as possible at the furthest point of the two inches of nerve. The motor impulse has then to travel along the two inches of nerve before it reaches the point at which, in the former experiment, it was first set up. On examination, it is found that the interval of time elapsing between the setting-up of the motor impulse and the commencement of the muscular contraction is greater in this case than in the preceding. Suppose it is 2-10ths of a second—we infer from this that it took the motor impulse 1-10th of a second to travel along the two inches of nerve: that is to say, the rate at which it travelled was one inch in 1-20th of a second.

DEATH OF A PATRIARCHAL GIPSY.—Major Boswell, who for the last seven years has made a tent on the Stone Read, Longton, his principal place of abode, died recently at the advanced age of 108 years. The body is "laid out" in characteristic gipsy style. He lies "in state" on a bed on the ground, covered with a white sheet, and a tuft of grass on the chest. The part of the tent where the body lies is lined with white, decorated with flowers, a picture of the Saviour, and wax candles on either side. The old man has not a wrinkle on his face, had only lost three teeth, and never consulted a doctor during his long earthly pilgrimage. He was twice married, and had by his second wife seventeen children, amongst whom he numbered fifty-nine grandchildren. His remains were interred in Dresden churchyard.

THE ECLIPSE EXPEDITION.—We are glad to be able to announce that the arrangements for the eclipse expedition are progressing very rapidly and satisfactorily, and that there seems every chance of everything being done which can insure success. In response to their circular, the council of the Royal Astronomical Society have received upwards of sixty applications from observers anxious to help in an examination of the phenomenon. It is proposed that, if possible, there shall be two expeditions; one to Spain, the other to Sicily. The desirability of this is obvious, as the chance of bad weather are considerably reduced. Unfortunately, those who know Sicily well state that the region to be visited is so brigand-ridden, that other precautions besides those usually employed in eclipse expeditions will be desirable. The Italian Government, which will also, we believe, send an expedition to Sicily, will, doubtless, look to this. The French expedition will observe in Algeria.

BACON.—People fond of bacon (and who in England is not, from the wealthiest to the poorest, alike in town and country?) had need at times to be careful in the cooking of it, as will be seen from the following extract from Dr. Whitmore's monthly report on the health of Marylebone:—A piece of bacon, purchased recently from a shop in the parish, was sent to me by a lady for my inspection. On examination I found it to contain several specimens of the *Cysticercus cellulosae*, or bladder worm. This bacon was the cured flesh of a measly pig, and if eaten without being thoroughly cooked, would probably produce tapeworm in those who might happen to partake of it. It is seldom that bacon in this state is brought to the London market, although it occasionally does find its way here from Ireland. A little care will readily detect the presence of these parasites; they are to be seen in the muscular or lean portions of the bacon, as small white specks, about the size of a pin's head;

some of these, where the salt has not penetrated, appear, when viewed through a magnifying glass, like small, oval, semi-transparent bladders, but where the salt has penetrated, they are opaque. Salting and smoking generally destroy them, but this is more effectually done by the bacon being thoroughly cooked.

THE VEILED LADY.

BY THE

Author of "Fairleigh," "The Rival Sisters," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XL.

STANDING for a moment in the centre of the luxurious room to which Mr. Wilton in person had condescendingly conducted him, Arthur gazed about with a glance of admiration, which, however, was tinged with contempt by a slight curling of his lips and the strange beam which shot from his full dark orbs. Then, throwing himself with almost a vengeful motion into a heavy stuffed chair, he laid his head upon the right arm, and in this ungracious, uneasy position he remained for a few moments, while his eyes shone with the varying lights of anger, remorse, sorrow, and repentance, and his face was pale, and disturbed at intervals by muscular twinges.

At length, as his thoughts grew more bitter, he lifted his head, assumed a similar position upon the left arm of the chair, and while his body moved convulsively in answer to the fierce tumult in his mind, he struck his clenched fist upon his right thigh, and ejaculated, in tones reprobative yet sad:

"Oh, why—why am I doomed to this? Oh, better had I died!—Oh, poverty most accursed!—Oh, tempter most subtle and potent! Oh, wretched life, I feel thy venomous sting in my very heart; that heart, oh, heaven, which 'twas once a mother's delight to keep pure; but stop—hush—let me not take her name upon my lips! no, no; I am not worthy of it. I am—oh, what am I? Oh, beating heart, be still!—Oh, memory, flee from me—flee—that I may be saved this torture of mind which thou bringest—this agony of soul—this revolting reflection which sears my brain and turns every thought to madness, and causes me to curse every pulsation of my being which prolongs this life!"

He paused, and gazed upwards for an instant, as if seeking divine consolation, his large shining eyes distended, and his breast rising and falling like the waves of the sea. For a short time he was silent, then a shudder crept over his frame, and clasping his hands across his brow, he wildly exclaimed:

"Oh, if this must be—if this must be, against which every feeling of my nature revolts, oh, heaven, extinguish now the spark of life in this worthless body, that I may be saved more—oh! I cannot speak the word, but to die now would be a blessing. Wilt thou, oh, Father, grant me that, or if not that, let me escape from this place; let me go anywhere—anywhere, but not here.—Oh, not here!"

Again he paused, glanced cautiously around, and then, carefully arising, walked towards the door which connected with the side room, to which reference has already been made.

He stopped, a very faint gleam of hope entered his eye, and he again looked imploringly upward; then, while his beautiful face became more calm, and his respiration easier, he advanced, and ex-citedly said:

"Oh, if I can but get away! if I can but snap this thread of woe which binds me, what joy will be mine!" and he placed his hand upon the knob of the door.

Instantly it flew open, and before the lad's terrified vision—with his coarse wicked features contorted into an expression of mingled hate and exultation, and his steely eyes gleaming with that dull awful glare, stood John Moran.

A pallor, as of death, swept over Arthur's face, his eyes dilated with horror, a flood of anguish inundated his mind, his heart beat like a tempest in his side, and catching at the head-board of the bed, he reeled, and in accents most painful, cried:

"Oh, you fiend, you demon, if you were dead, I could breathe again. But no, no, you never

will die, but live to curse me. Go, go!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" chuckled the monster, in that heavy, grating voice, and bending his stony gaze upon the shrilling child. "You were about to leave, were you, but you won't go from my power until the stars are sunk in the ocean. Ha, ha, ha!"

The lad turned his black eyes upon him, glowing with dismay, while his breath came in short, quick gasps, and his form trembled. For a moment he stood thus; then a revulsion of feeling occurred, his teeth met with a snap, his eyes emitted a light of rage, and with a cry of mingled ferocity and despair, he sprang towards his tormentor.

The other anticipated the movement, and while

the heavy beard around his thick, sensual lips bristled like that of an enraged lion, he drew a pistol, pressed the muzzle against the brow of the perturbed boy, and articulated, in tones husky and ominous:

"You lift but a finger, and I will blow you to atoms! I've a mind to do it as it is!"

As that terrible instrument of death made cold his forehead, the lad felt a stagnating weakness permeate his whole being, and with a piteous cry of agony, which reverberated through the room, and seemed to swell with grief as it went, he sank at the brute's feet.

Moran laughed, a laugh that sounded more like the crackle of a flame than a human voice, and then sparing the recumbent form with a malicious kick, he threw himself into a chair, and gazed with evil, complacent satisfaction upon the lad. At length, however, he became tired of this, and arising, angrily commanded:

"Get up."

Slowly Arthur arose until he attained a sitting position, and then resting one hand upon the floor, and lifting his haggard face, he ejaculated, in tones of blotted wrath, terror, and pleading:

"Oh, man most unnatural! Oh, man most debased! will you not let me draw one breath in peace? Will you not be kind once, and prove that you have a semblance of a heart?"

"Look you boy," and the heavy brows rolled down, and the steely eyes gleamed, "I'll have no more of this, now stop this whining! I swear you shall obey me, or—"

"Stop, stop!" shrieked the lad, his lips turning ashy. "Oh, say no more! You will drive me mad!"

And he sank upon a chair, while his frame shook, and low, heart-rending moans welled up from his perturbed breast.

But Moran gave no heed to the grief which penetrated every fibre of the child's being; instead of that, he regarded him with that cold, implacable stare, and grunted in heathenish glee.

And still the conflict continued in the mind of the lad; still honour fought with wrong, sensitivity strove with indifference, and conscience waged war against destiny, but the latter, ever stern and unyielding, conquered, and then again his anguish burst forth.

Moran advanced, placed his hand heavily upon the lad's shoulder, and bending over him, while that baleful light issued from his eye and his teeth rasped, he hissed:

"Will you obey—will you do as I have told you, or go—you know where?"

Arthur was silent a moment, while his very being quivered from the effect of the surging emotions in his breast, which sent keen pangs to his heart, and burned like caustic in his brain. At length he resolved to make one more appeal in behalf of his honour, and raising his pale, sorrowful face, he beseechingly cried:

"Oh, mercy—have mercy! Let one feeling of justice live in that iron breast—let me—"

A stinging blow upon his cheek cut short his words, and Moran stood over him with uplifted fist, and his quickly-coming breath denoting increased ferocity, while in accents hoarse and seething, came the words:

"You beggar—you hound, did you hear me? If you utter another word—if you breathe against my wishes, I'll send you to—"

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed the lad, his voice so tremulous that it was hardly intelligible. "Spare me that! I—oh, I will obey!"

And again he sank back, while abhorrence, terror, and anguish chilled his heart.

"Ha—a! ha—a!" echoed that dreadful howl-laugh.

And the inhuman wretch placed his revolting features close to the shrinking lad, and his hot breath wafted across his face, while his glittering eyes with their shaggy pall-like brows, shone like spheres of steel imbedded in coal.

The child recoiled; a spasm of acute pain convulsed his features, and he wildly cried:

"Oh, go—go away! Your presence is dreadful. The very atmosphere chokes me. Go—oh, go!"

"Don't be in a hurry, my raven-haired darling," chuckled Moran, with a glance of scorn and triumph. "You don't get rid of me at your beck, and what is more, you'll never get rid of me!"

The lad fell upon the bed, and buried his face in the pillow, while low sobs now and then escaped his lips, and at intervals his form quaked as if with ague.

For a few moments Moran regarded him in silence; then, with a sneering leer which curled back his bearded lips, he approached the bed, and whispered a few words in the lad's ear.

"Oh, oh! That too!" and with these words, uttered in a shriek, the lad leaped from the couch as though impelled by some great physical force.

"Will you?" and Moran's fingers closed around his throat, and his face was distorted by a look of cannibalistic rage.

Arthur dropped upon his knees, and lifting his snowy face upward, while the brilliancy of his large black eyes increased its look of awful anguish, he supplicatingly moaned:

"Oh, Heaven! deliver me—hear me, hear me!"

And while his head shook from side to side, as if palsied with horror and sorrow, he wrung his hands and groaned in despair.

Moran's features twitched, his eyes snapped, and bending over him, he muttered in a rattling voice:

"Yes, both. It must be, it shall be, or I will burn you to death!"

Arthur made no reply, exhaustion was fast overcoming him, and his temples ached and vibrated from the terrible agitation he had experienced.

"Do you hear?" and the reprobate applied his foot to the trembling form.

"Yes, yes," gasped the lad, hardly above a whisper, and covered his face with his hands to conceal from his view those awful features, hideous in their expression.

"Ha, ha!" croaked Moran, "you'll do, you imp."

But I'm going now. Good-bye, Arthur. Ha, ha!"

"Thank heaven for that!" murmured the lad, uncovering his face for an instant.

"I'm not gone yet," continued the villain, returning and seating himself at the lad's side, and beating him at intervals with his fist, "and you be easy with that cursed tongue of yours. Do you hear?"

Alas, only too plainly did he hear! If he had not, his mind would have been comparatively free from the ceaseless tumult of disturbed emotions, the constant rushing of sad, angry, remorseful and reproachful thoughts, and the feeling of debilitating horror which oppressed him. He crashed, by a powerful exercise of his remaining strength, the wrathful words which arose to his lips, knowing that such would only serve to detain Moran longer.

Satisfied that the lad would say nothing which would afford him an opportunity to exercise his diabolical revenge upon him, Moran gave him a parting blow, and then, uttering a few blasphemous words, left the room by the side door.

For some time the lad remained passive, then slowly arising he glanced about with a look almost of vacancy, so weakening to his nerves had been the excitement which he had undergone. But it was only momentarily, and in a rush of sorrow the thoughts of his situation returned, and clasping his hands he knelt upon the carpet at the side of the bed, and cried:

"Oh, what, what shall I do? I am oppressed by horror; oh, most agonizing, dreadful horror, that freezes the blood in my veins! And will this last? Shall I be doomed to the fate which menaces me? Oh, no, no! Father in heaven I beseech thee say no!"

He paused, and as he felt that he was alone and powerless to help himself, he again broke forth:

"But I am alone, all, all alone, and what can I do against this fiend, who knows no pity but is as hard as granite, and fierce as the tiger in the jungle? It sinks upon me this cruel knowledge; it makes all dark; it is the signal of my fate! Oh, Father, again I ask, will they avert it? Send me one kind friend, one friend; I crave no more!" and he buried his face in the pillow.

As he uttered the last word a head appeared from beneath the couch, and whose glistening eyes, with eagle glances, surveyed the apartment, and then were directed towards the perturbed youth with a look of sympathy. Presently the stranger carefully emerged from his place of concealment, and drawing himself up to his full height, stood silently gazing upon the bed.

In a moment Arthur raised his head, and, starting back in amazement and fear, exclaimed:

"Are you one of his minions whom he has left to guard me? Speak and begone!"

Mr. Christopher Dikely seated himself with the utmost composure, drew a cigar from his case, very deliberately ignited it, and then leaning back in his chair, inhaled and exhaled the narcotic vapour with evident relish. At length he looked up, and casually remarked:

"It's very unpleasant staying under a bed two hours. Did you ever have a like experience?"

"You have been here then?" ejaculated Arthur, quivering between hope and doubt, "you have heard all? Oh, tell me who you are, and why you are here?"

"Yes," said Dikely, knocking the ashes from his havanna, "and I never saw a more impolite person than Mr. Moran—did you?"

"Oh, I beg you not to keep me in suspense," cried the lad, his chest rising and falling under the face of his new emotion. "Do not trifling thus; surely you must know my feelings, if you have heard our conversation."

"Don't be excited," observed Dikely, with that smile so peculiar to him. "Self-possession is desirable; it is the way of doing business."

Arthur sank back in his chair, and pressing his hands to his aching head, looked upon his second

visitor in silence, although a wild desire to know who and what he was, caused him much agitation.

"You don't seem to be as glad to see me as you usually are," said Dikely; "why is it?"

"What can you mean?" exclaimed Arthur, wonderingly, "I never saw you before!"

Dikely raised his eyebrows, laughed lightly, and carelessly answered:

"You've lost your senses, you never talked so before."

"Oh, please explain yourself," pleaded Arthur, in a tone of pain. "I don't know you, but I want to, very much."

"Whew!" and Dikely blew a cloud of smoke into the air, and, arising, approached the lad, and gazed steadily into his face; then, with more surprise than he ever before expressed, he struck his hand against his right thigh, and exclaimed:

"By Jove, it's wonderful, almost a perfect resemblance! Oh, Dikely, you've been sold once!" and he resumed his seat, and again directed his eyes upon his companion.

"You talk very strangely," persisted Arthur, earnestly; "will you tell me why?"

"You wished for a friend?" queried Dikely, abruptly.

A faint flush of hope mounted the lad's features, and drawing nearer, he impressively replied:

"Yes, and Heaven knows I need one—but go on!"

"I should think you did," said Dikely, with his usual apparent indifference, "but friends are very scarce, very."

The lad sighed, and directed his eyes upon the floor.

"Would you not becomely with a friend?" asked Dikely, suddenly.

"I do not wonder that you ask that, after hearing our conversation," responded the lad, in a tone of deep mortification. "But I assure you before Heaven that I am *sure*."

"Good," commented Dikely, "you shall have a friend."

"Heaven has heard my prayer!" cried the lad, and, advancing, he grasped his companion's hand, shook it warmly, and added:

"I am very grateful—you are most kind—I am at your command."

"I never command," mused Dikely; "if one cares not enough for me to comply with my requests, I shake him off."

"Oh, that is far better," exclaimed Arthur, gladly. "What can I do, what can I say to prove my gratitude?"

"I will tell you," responded Dikely, with more than usual earnestness. "You can be quiet, trust wholly me, but never recognise me before a third person, and lastly, be honest."

"I will, I will," rejoined the lad, "and it will be more happiness than I have experienced for a long time. I will obey you in everything—but your name, please?"

Dikely gave him his name, and then, grasping his hand, and gazing significantly into his face, he said:

"I am going now; you will remember what I told you?"

"I will."

"You understand it all?"

"Perfectly."

"Tis well; be as happy as you can, and fear not, adieu!" and with these words Dikely left the room.

A moment Arthur stood silent, then he knelt down by the bed, and thanked Heaven for answering his prayer. When he arose his face was calm and peaceful, and in a voice of thankfulness, he murmured:

"I can sleep now."

CHAPTER XL

It was the morning succeeding the eventful day on which the youth of the fiery heart had been introduced to those who manifested such a deep and earnest interest in him, and had endeavoured to impress it upon him that he was their long-lost son.

Frank, who had just arose from his couch, stood gazing out of the low window upon the beautiful flowers whose petals had just expanded under the rays of the brilliant orb of day, and upon which the diamond dew-drops yet lingered, and then, looking further away, beheld the plain, with its tall grass waving under the impetus of the gentle south wind, and the herds quietly grazing.

It was a pleasant morning scene, such as one delights to look upon when first arising from the arms of sleep, and to such an extent did it arouse the admiration of the youth, that he forgot for the moment his perplexing situation, but was immediately reminded of it by seeing Don Santo and Sylvia beneath his window.

Instantly he stepped back, that he might be secure from observation. He had no sooner done so than he heard Don Santo's voice conveying the following words:

"Enrique is not up yet, is he, Sylvia?"

"I have not seen him," answered Sylvia; "he is probably too weary to rise so early."

"Yes, yes;" assented the Don, with a long-drawn sigh; "but I hope when he does awake he will be better in his mind."

"Oh, so do I, papa;" replied Sylvia, very earnestly. "What do you suppose caused him to act so strangely; it is not natural that one should forget his own kin?"

"No, no; very unnatural," said the Don; "and it cannot be that one of our race would do so. It is his mind that has been affected by some unhappy incident of his past life."

"And can we not restore his memory, papa?"

"I hope so, my daughter. I hope so," rejoined the Don, with sincerity; "we must try, by love and every means in our power."

"But, papa—" and Sylvia hesitated.

"Go on, my child," observed the Don, encouragingly; "say what you like, I shall not be offended."

"Thank you, papa," responded the maiden. "I was about to say that I think it better not to keep the idea before his mind that we think him demented, for it serves to irritate him. Instead of sighing and expressing our sadness when he makes a singular remark, let us laugh at it, and at least affect happiness. This, I think, will have a salutary effect."

"Thank you for that, Senorita Sylvia," mused the youth; "it will certainly be much pleasanter for me."

"Perhaps you are right, my daughter," returned the Don. "Indeed I hope you are, and you and I can act upon your suggestion; but you must remember that your mother has not the faintest idea of the manner in which your brother has treated you and myself, therefore she is liable to say many things which may conflict with our arrangement, and materially retard our progress."

"I know it, papa, but that we cannot help, for we know that it would not be advisable to tell her our opinions in regard to the state of Enrique's health?"

"No, no, certainly not," responded the Don, decisively. "She must not know, or even suspect it, it would cause her much sorrow."

"But supposing he should say something, which should arouse her apprehension, what then?"

"It is a sad emergency to look forward to," answered the Don, with a melancholy shake of his head; "I hope it will not be realised, but if it should, and in our presence, we must say something to annul the effect of his words."

A silence now fell upon them. The Don stood resting upon his cane, gazing over the prairie, and Sylvia seemed lost in meditation.

"As I said last night," soliloquised the youth, "I must work out what destiny has placed in my path, and as easily as possible. It is only too evident that the good old Don is convinced that I am his son, and has also imbued the gentle Sylvia with the same idea. It is a most embarrassing position, yet I cannot change it. Resistance is useless, and I must coincide with their opinions as far as my own honour will permit, for I cannot bear the censure which they exhibit when I make a *faux pas*, and they attribute it to lunacy; that is the worst feature of this new existence."

He paused and drew nearer the window, for the Don and his daughter had renewed their conversation.

"Papa," exclaimed Sylvia, with enthusiasm, "I have an idea which may assist us in restoring dear Enrique's memory."

"You have?" said the Don, partaking somewhat of her ardour. "What is it?—tell me quickly."

"You are aware that Enrique was very fond of Inez, before he went away?"

"Yes," mused the Don, inclining his head, "Inez Carro you refer to?"

"Certainly," replied Sylvia, "since there is no other Inez who is so intimate with us. Well, now I propose that we make some arrangement to have them meet, though our agency must be kept secret."

"A good idea, Sylvia," remarked her father; but it would be most strange if he should recognise her when he failed to know his own father."

"So it would," returned Sylvia, peering out half-quisquously from the corner of her eyes; "but you know that love is a strange thing, and sometimes acts queerly."

"Tut, tut, my daughter," reproved the Don, with a slight smile, "a boy of fourteen knows nothing of love, and even if such an absurd thing were possible, six years' absence would entirely obliterate it."

"Perhaps," responded Sylvia, incredulously; "but you recollect, papa, that Enrique and Inez were constantly together as playmates; indeed, even you and Don Carro often referred to it in jest, but still the words might have had their influence."

"True, my daughter; I had quite forgotten the fact. It is hardly possible, however, that any feeling deeper than childish regard could have sprang

from their companionship. As to our words, Don Carro and I, why the children could hardly comprehend them."

"Perhaps not," repeated Sylvia, more incredulously, "but we will not argue that point. The plan I suggest can do no harm, and may be productive of good. What do you think of it?"

"I said once I thought it good, and we had better put it into execution." He was silent a moment, and then reflectively continued: "Indeed if Enrique should fancy Inez—and Inez is a good, sweet child, you know, Sylvia—why I think I shall rather favour the union—"

The youth started back from the window, and lowly ejaculated:

"It deepens! Already I hear that I left this house six years ago, when at that time I was shut up on that desolate island. In addition, I hear that I left behind me a young girl—a playmate, and yet I never saw this place before, or ever heard of the girl, but the Don would contradict me if I should tell him so, and has already begun to contemplate my marriage. Were it not that deep sincerity pervades the acts of those around him, and their looks, without their words, proclaim their intelligence as well as love for me, I should really consider them a parcel of lunatics."

He paused, remained silent a few moments, and then meditatively resumed:

"Again that question arises which has so assailed me during my short but eventful life—what shall I do? I am already aware that Senorita Inez will be brought forward, for the purpose of testing my memory. As I have overheard the arrangement, I could dissemble, and greet Senorita Inez as though I had known her, as the fair Sylvia avers that I have. That course would at once banish all thoughts of my insanity from the mind of the gentleman who declares that he is my father, and give me no annoyance in consequence of it, but instead of that allow me to lead an easy life beloved by many. On the contrary, if I inform Senorita Inez that I know her not, she will instantly grasp at the opinion which is prevalent in regard to my lunacy, and probably weep over me as the others have. This will engender in my new friends extra sorrow, produce confusion, and be a source of almost unendurable vexation to me; truly, the former course seems the quietest and most enjoyable one to pursue, but would it be right?"

He stopped as his pure conscience suggested that question. He hesitated, and reflected a moment. Then while his jetty eyes reflected his nobility of soul, he struck his hands firmly together, and emphatically exclaimed:

"No, no, thine no! If I, to gain freedom from irritation and annoyance, should lend my aid to further deceive those good people, who are deluding themselves, what disgrace would be mine when the guise should fall as all such do. No! I will not seek to raise new love in their breasts; I will do my duty honourably as a true man should; and if they think me a madman or idiot, I care not as long as my own conscience is clear. Better that I should endure the odium now which their pity and sadness will occasion, than at some future time to receive their contempt, for endeavouring to lead them deeper into the net-work of errors which they are weaving for themselves. Still, I will be careful of their feelings, and especially those of Donna Eulalie, for she is aged, and a sudden disruption of her pet idea might prove deleterious to her health. At the same time, however, I shall zealously guard my own honour, and say nothing which could be construed into a confirmation of their views."

And with these words, so full of that integrity which was an intransigent part of his character, so resolute with that justice which he desired to administer to all in his every-day acts, and tinged with that consideration and tenderness which were two of the noble qualities of his fiery heart, the youth went below.

As he entered, Donna Eulalie smiled with that benign love which glorifies a mother's features, and advancing, and drawing him to her breast, said:

"Good morning, my dear Enrique, did your rest seem home-like?"

That embrace—those words which sounded so motherly, caused the youth real pain, as he felt that he was usurping the place of another. However her eyes were upon him; he must say something, and smiling kindly, he rejoined:

"My sleep was sweet, thank you; but isn't the morning beautiful?"

He had hoped to change the subject by this reference to the morning; but, as a general thing, mothers are apt to rate beauties of nature second to their sons, and especially when they have but one. Accordingly, Donna Eulalie, who was not an exception, but on the contrary, an excellent illustration of this rule, took no notice of his last words, but gazed upon him, half-sadly, for a moment, and then queried:

"Why don't you call me mother, Enrique?"

Here was a question, and such a question! He



[MORAN AND HIS VICTIM.]

did not wish to wound her feelings, which he knew a true reply would do. He had decided not to add to the general belief, consequently he could not equivocate, and for once he was puzzled. At this juncture, Sylvia fortunately entered, bearing in her hand a beautiful bouquet, which she presented to her mother, with the remark :

"There, mother, darling, I called those for you when the sweet morning dew yet lingered upon their tendrils. Are they not lovely, and so fragrant? Just inhale their odours."

"Yes, they are very rich and sweet, my daughter," answered Donna Eulalie, with a great smile; "but in your enthusiasm you forgot the presence of your brother."

It was only too palpable that the son could hardly be free from the mother's mind an instant.

"Pardon me, dear Enrique," exclaimed Sylvia, pressing a kiss upon his lips, "I did not see you at first. You are looking very bright this morning!"

The youth could hardly repress a laugh, as he thought of the ambiguity of her words, and with a smile that would linger around his lips he replied :

"Thank you, Sylvia. Improvement is ever desirable."

She noticed his constrained tone, although there was merriment in it, and for an instant gazed upon him doubtfully; then, recollecting her resolution, she smiled sweetly, and said :

"Will you ride with me after you breakfast, Enrique?"

"With pleasure," he returned. "I suppose my pony is still here?"

These words were spoken in all innocence, and in referring to the pony he meant the horse that he had hired at the hotel. But to Sylvia they had a far different signification, for the pony which her brother had rode upon when a child had been kept, with the hope that sometime his youthful rider would return. And now Sylvia, delighted by his words, and labouring under the joyful illusion that he was regaining his memory, ran from the house, sought her father, and grasping him by the arm, hastily exclaimed :

"Oh, father, father!" and stopped for want of breath.

"What, Sylvia, what?" gasped the Don, excited to alarm by her hurried manner. "Speak, child! What has occurred?"

"Oh, I'm so glad. Enrique asked about his pony. He remembers! Oh, I can't speak! I run so fast. Oh!" and the dark eyes glistened with happiness, and the beautiful breast rose and fell, and the rich, cherry lips were parted to recover respiration.

The Don gazed upon her a moment with an ex-

pression in which hope, doubt, and anticipated beatitude were closely combined; then, drawing her to his breast in his thankfulness for the communication, he lowly and earnestly said :

"Thank Heaven for that! Oh, I knew he could not forget his parents, when we all love him so—the dear, dear boy! Oh, Sylvia, it causes my heart to revive!" and the old man dashed a tear from his eye.

"Oh yes, dear papa," added the lovely girl, "and we'll see if Enrique will know his pony, and Enrique and I will ride, and we'll all be happy again, and I'll bring Inez. Oh, won't it be nice?"

"Unhappy father, deluded daughter," mused the youth, who at that moment stepped out upon the greenward and had overheard their words, though he was still concealed from their view by an angle of the house.

A moment he hesitated, and then appeared before them.

"Good morning, my dear son," said the Don, warmly grasping both his hands, and gazing kindly into his face, "have you recovered your strength?"

"I am feeling very well this morning, thank you."

The Don noticed the omission of the word father, and sighed, but made no comments."

"Now I'll go and tell Zane to saddle our ponies," exclaimed Sylvia, merrily, and scampered away like a young gazelle.

Presently she returned. In a few moments a groom appeared leading two horses.

Instead of the animal which he expected to see, the youth beheld a handsome horse of medium size, and as black as night. He was about to express his astonishment, when suddenly he remembered that it would do no good, and might depress the spirits of the party. Accordingly he approached the steed, and gently patted his neck.

Closely the Don watched him and the horse, for the animal was one of unusual intelligence and sagacity, and had been made almost a play-fellow of by Enrique, when the latter was a child, and had expressed for him at that time all the affection and tenderness which it is possible for an animal to evince.

Softly Frank smoothed the mane and patted the forehead of the steed, while the large eyes of the latter rested upon him with a glance almost human. Presently, as the youth's caresses became more earnest, the horse neighed, and lapped Frank's hand, and then, breaking away from his grasp, jumped and gambolled about, returning at intervals to lay his head upon the youth's shoulder.

"Even your pony knows you," exclaimed the Don, unable to restrain his gladness. "The dumb

animals attest their pleasure by capering about. Oh, this is as welcome as it is strange!"

The youth perfume smiled, but made no reply. The Don's happiness increased his sadness, though no expression of it rested upon his features, and turning again to the horse he said, using the first words that arose to his mind :

"You are a fine fellow, Milo."

"What!" cried the Don, starting forward and clasping his left hand, "you call him by name—you remember! Oh, joy, joy!"

The youth hung his head, and deeply regretted using that name, yet he had not the most remote idea that it belonged to the steed; but how incomprehensible, almost weird it seemed that every innocent word of his should conduce to strengthen the belief of those around him in his identity with their beloved relative.

"Why are you silent?" asked the Don, a shade resting upon his joy. "You have called him by name; you remember! Oh, you must!"

The youth felt that he must make one more emphatic declaration; and, looking the Don directly in the face, he earnestly rejoined :

"Don Santo, it was a mere accident my uttering that name, I tell you honestly. I never saw you or this country before."

"I spoke too quick, I jarred his mind and aroused the monomania again," mused the Don, with a melancholy shake of his head.

Then, after a moment's silence, he lowly continued, as if to allay the other's insane excitement :

"Never mind, my boy; never mind. Sylvia will come presently, and then you can ride."

A red flush mounted the cheeks of the youth, and for an instant his fiery heart battled with his will. But determined to crush his indignation that he might not cause more sadness, he turned and walked away.

"Come, Enrique, I am ready."

"Twas the voice of Sylvia who now issued from the house, attired in a dark blue habit, and her luxuriant ringlets surmounted by a jaunty cap.

With a forced smile the youth approached and assisted her into the saddle; then mounting his own steed, he waved his hand to Don Santo, and flew down the road with Sylvia by his side.

"This is an excellent chance to escape" thought the youth. "I will try."

(To be continued.)

THE Countess of Caen has died at Paris, leaving an income of 150,000 francs annually to the Institut des Beaux Arts.



[THE RETURNED CONVICT.]

MYSTERY OF THE BLACK DIAMOND.

CHAPTER VII.

CONWAY had not gone to the Continent. The letter to Eleanor was only another of those small ruses with which he sought to advance his great project, his one last venture.

He had indeed pretended to depart from his quarters in Chester, for several reasons. Among others, his creditors, who had discovered his whereabouts, he imagined from certain indications—which, by the way, were significant of the men Lord Eaglescliffe had put on his track instead—he had in reality, only gone far enough to safely assume a suitable disguise. He returned to the locality in a smock-frock, and a wig of long hair. If he had removed his beard, he might have escaped recognition. But he could not bring his mind to the sacrifice of these shining black waves, which gave such picturesque attractiveness to his handsome face, and the omission proved his ruin.

Matters were getting desperate with Vane Conway. He was resolved at any risk to see Lady Violet, and win or lose all at a stroke. He had not, indeed, money enough to quit the country decently, and a debtor's prison gazed at him every step of the way.

A marriage with the young heiress would settle all those difficulties, for, though Lady Violet could not touch a penny, even of the fortune left her by her uncle, at present, immense wealth was inevitably hers in the future; and it would be easy enough to raise money on the prospect, if the marriage could once be managed.

Surely, Vane Conway reasoned, if his tongue had not lost its cunning, this romantic girl, who had fallen so easily in love with the dark beauty of his false face, might be won to flee with him, could he but get safe speech of her.

Night after night, he hung about among the shadows of Eaglescliffe, watching Lady Violet's apartments. He had made up his mind, in his usual reckless fashion, to try and enter them.

But he found himself shrinking unaccountably from the undertaking, though no great danger was involved apparently.

There was a pretty and convenient balcony opening from Lady Violet's conservatory. A ladder, a dark night, and a fair amount of nerve and effrontery were all that were necessary besides. The last two

Conway certainly was not lacking in, and the first were ready to his hand. There was no moon just now, and the ladder he wanted reposed against an old wall within sight of the heiress's window.

An unaccountable reluctance was on him nevertheless. After he had shouldered the ladder, he set it down again.

"I never felt like this but once before, in that affair at The Nest," he muttered with a shiver. "That brought meonly disgrace and ruin, and if I were disposed to be superstitious, I should say this was going to bring me something worse."

He stood frowning in thought some moments, then with an audible oath, he lifted the ladder, and passing swiftly across the intervening space, placed it against the balcony, mounted it and disappeared. His plan was to conceal himself in the conservatory, till Lady Violet came to her apartments for the night. He could see through the clear plate-glass doors, into the luxuriously and elegantly room beyond, and he amused himself while he waited, with watching Fidel's parade herself before the handsome mirror, and in taking a sort of anticipatory inventory of the various costly appointments, which he could see from his hiding-place.

It was not yet late, and the party in the drawing-room, consisting of Lord Eaglescliffe, Lady Violet, Miss Lyle and Captain Evelyn, had not yet left it, when a servant came with a note for Captain Evelyn.

The captain's careless face never changed as he passed the hasty scrawl to the earl, and went on turning Lady Violet's music.

Not so Lord Eaglescliffe. He rose and quitted the room with a flushed countenance, unconscious in his perturbation that the note had fluttered to the floor, unseen by any but Miss Lyle. Quietly Eleanor secured it, and evading the eyes of the others, read it.

"A man has just entered Lady Violet's apartments, and concealed himself in the conservatory. D—"

Miss Lyle felt her heart, which had beat sluggish enough a moment before, give a sudden leap. "Why, where is papa?" inquired Lady Violet, turning about from the piano. "I did not hear him go out; was his head worse, Eleanor?"

Eleanor muttered something as she crumpled the bit of paper in her nervous hand, and Captain Evelyn, with a sharp glance at Miss Lyle's agitated face, took up the explanation, and managed to divert Lady Violet's attention, just as a faint sound of some distant commotion became barely audible.

Eleanor made her escape from the room the next moment, and flew crazily in the direction of Lady

Violet's chambers. A sharp flash of intuition told her what man would be most likely of all others to hide in the conservatory.

She saw it all in a moment. The letter she was treasuring so fondly had been written to put her off her guard.

She found Lady Violet's rooms closed. Fidel had been sent off on some excuse, and the door of the ante-chamber was locked. She listened a moment, and drew back as the door opened, and Lord Eaglescliffe looked out. His face was still flushed, his manner anxious and flurried.

"Is that you, Miss Lyle?" he asked, in a tone of some relief, as though he was better pleased it should be she than some one else. "He has dared his own fate," he continued, hurriedly; "and I want to get him out of the house without any of the servants seeing him, for Violet's sake. Will you go along the south corridor and send any of them out of the way who may chance to be about?"

Miss Lyle managed to lift her feet somehow, and moved away. Her intuitions had told her truly; though the earl had uttered no name, she knew what had happened as well as though he had spoken it.

The south corridor had the reputation of being haunted, and was consequently not frequented much by the servants, who would take a longer way in preference any time. It was the most direct way out, and the least exposed to that observation which Lord Eaglescliffe wished to avoid.

Shrinking into a corner, Miss Lyle saw Conway as he came, his arms pinioned, two men on either side of him, and Lord Eaglescliffe sternly leading the way.

She knew him, of course, in spite of his disguise; the disordered confusion of his appearance, with his rich hair tumbled over his face, and a slouched hat crowded down over his eyes.

In spite of herself she uttered a low cry at the wretched forlornness of his look, and with a fierce toss of his head he sent the hat flying. While one of the men replaced it the unhappy man darted a fiery glance at Eleanor, and his pinioned hands clenched.

"It was you who betrayed me, curse you," he hissed through his set teeth as they dragged him away.

"Oh, no, no, no," gasped Eleanor, springing forward.

No one heard or heeded her.

Lord Eaglescliffe, having shown the party out, and directed them across the park to where a close carriage waited, came back through the hall, where Miss Lyle still stood trying to calm her agony.

"Will you call some one, Miss Lyle—I—feel—strangely," his lordship uttered, catching blindly at the wall, and then falling in a swoon upon the floor. The excitement had brought on an apoplectic fit.

Miss Lyle was shocked, as it were, out of her own thoughts. She had self-possession enough, still, not to set up a chorus of screams as she fled through the halls in search of help, though she had no suspicion but that it was death had stricken Lord Eaglecliffe. She knew that his father had died that way. She despatched a messenger for a physician the first thing, and sent another to tell Captain Evelyn and Lady Violet. At the same time she superintended the removal of the unconscious form to his lordship's private apartments.

The servant sent to the drawing-room encountered Captain Evelyn with his charge, whom he had with some ado detained there by one excuse or another, till, in vague alarm, she refused to be detained a moment longer. The man had caught a hint of what had been going on, and had drawn his own inference.

"There's been a robber in the house, my lady, and Lord Eaglecliffe—"

Captain Evelyn hushed him roughly, not knowing what might have happened. But it was too late. Lady Violet heard the heavy tramp of the man bearing her father to his own chamber, and was beside him before anyone could hinder.

Captain Evelyn followed quickly, but only in time to receive the stricken girl's fainting form.

Lord Eaglecliffe was not dead. Two medical men were with him within the hour; and, soon after midnight, Roy Evelyn brought the happy news to Lady Violet and Miss Lyle, waiting in the anteroom, that he was better, and particularly desired that they should retire to their own apartments, and try to get some rest.

Vane Conway slept in a prison that night, and the unhappy girl, who believed herself his wife, tossed restlessly upon her couch of down, and dreamed that the two years' continental sojourn was ended already, and that he had come to claim his bride. She woke in a cold sweat of horror, from seeing her father stretched at her feet, with Conway pointing to him, reaching his arms to clasp her at the same moment.

The Earl of Eaglecliffe recovered slowly, but he was warned by his physicians that, this being the second attack of the kind, his lease of life was bounded by the next, and the usual exhortation to abstemiousness and avoidance of mental excitements followed.

Lady Violet never guessed who the real disturber of the peace and quiet of that unhappy night had been. She stood by while the broken and strangled shrubs were removed from her conservatory the following morning, and only shrugged her shoulders disdainfully at Fiducie's horrified recital of particulars.

Once Eleanor Lyle, standing by, was seized with an overwhelming desire to tell her who had been the ignoble hero of that midnight drama, and claim her interference to save him from a convict's doom. But she only got so far as to whisper cautiously in my lady's ear:

"It would not have been surprising to me if Vane had tried some such desperate experiment for the sake of seeing you—if he had not already gone."

Lady Violet's great, black eyes surveyed her in one half-gaunt, half-scorful flash.

"I believe I desired you never to mention that man's name to me again," she said, after a pause, in a chilling voice.

Miss Lyle's predominant trait of character was her caution. She remained silent, only saying to herself:

"I don't know what she would do in her anger, if I told her. I won't trust her. I'll write and tell Vane how matters stand instead, and let him make such use as he likes of the knowledge. I shall still have it in my power to stop him if he is likely to go too far."

That letter was written and dispatched. It reached Conway at least a week before the trial.

It found him pacing his cell in a bitter rage with all the world, and with Eleanor Lyle in particular. False himself, to his very heart's core, it was easy for him to believe that the girl whose heart he had wrung so many times had at last turned against, and betrayed him. His black eyes glowed like live coals as he recognised upon the envelope the handwriting of her he had that moment been cursing in his heart.

He deliberately tore in strips the letter Eleanor had written to save him, flung the pieces contemptuously on the floor of the cell, and stamped on them.

Then bethinking himself that the letter might contain something which could be used against him at the coming trial, he carefully gathered up every fragment, and in the lack of facilities for destroying them, concealed them in the lining of his coat.

Undoubtedly, if he had known the contents of that

letter, Vane Conway would have made such application of them as would have kept him out of the felon's dock at least. But he did not know them, he never guessed them, till the trial was over, he was convicted and on board ship, going where he would not be likely to trouble either Lord Eaglecliffe or his daughter for some time to come.

Far out at sea, the whim seized him to see what Eleanor Lyle had to say for herself. He accordingly pasted the torn fragments of her letter together and read.

It is, perhaps, needless to say that it was a bitter pill. All the more bitter from the fact that his own folly had put it out of his power to use it as Eleanor intended. But he rallied from the shock to new devices of villainy. He cursed Eleanor in one breath and lauded her in the next.

"She might have done worse; and I ought to have known that she wouldn't go against me, as I thought she had," he said to himself, thoughtfully.

"Now, if she holds her tongue, and I ever get back to England, I will have pay for some things. If my lady thinks I am her husband, so I am. Why not? with a snap of his white fingers. "There's only one man in England can prove to the contrary and he don't know his own luck. Odd. By George! But

Conway was not popular on board ship—among the convicts, that is—he was too fine a gentleman, too overbearing in his sukkiness at misfortune, in the arrogance induced by the visionary hopes he was building upon the secret Eleanor Lyle had revealed to him.

But among these low and degraded wretches, with whom Providence had for the present cast his lot, was one, a mere lad, with a shock of ugly red hair, and a fearfully scared and homely face, who had seemed to take to the ruined gentleman from the first.

Something about the boy, in spite of his ugliness, attracted Conway's fancy too, and the lad being a mite, indulged a whimsical humour in talking to him by the hour of his sickness when he should get back to England.

"I have left someone behind me, my lad," he would say, with his handsome, wicked eyes aglow, "who won't leave a stone unturned till I am out of this. If it should take years, she would go on trying all the same. The deuce!" he exclaimed, suddenly, "where did you get those eyes, my man?"

Bob did not answer in words, which was not to be wondered at, if he was a mute. But Conway could have sworn that his dark eyes had lightened wonderfully as he spoke. Indeed, he said to himself, as he looked away, that Bob's eyes had been set in a delicate rose-leaf face, like one he remembered, he could have sworn that it was the face itself.

"Poor little Daisy," he murmured, and dropped his face on his hands in a rare revelation of feeling.

Bob's eyes followed him darkly. Bob sat like a statue watching him.

The boy attached himself more closely than ever to him after this, and there was a dumb-loving eloquence in his large, slow-moving glance, that would remind one of the unquestioning, unresenting, affection of some animal for its keeper.

CHAPTER VIII.

"I wish you would not, Eleanor. You are always schoolrooming me lately. Will you never understand that Captain Evelyn is papa's guest, not mine. I can't do less than treat him courteously, and I don't do more."

From where she stood, with the sunset light glancing off her exquisite face, and lighting up the jewels at her white throat, till it seemed circled with fire, Lady Violet broke off spray after spray of the late roses, and flung them from the terrace in sheer nervousness and impatience.

Eleanor Lyle, grown haggard and old since Conway's arrest, watched her gravely.

"You are a married woman, and you do not love your husband—"

Lady Violet interrupted her, her face blanched, her voice icy.

"That is one of your assumptions; you will be good enough to keep to the subject. We were speaking of Captain Evelyn."

"If my assumption is a true one," persisted Eleanor, grimly, "there is all the more need of my warning, for you are in danger, as well as he."

"I?"

She uttered the single exclamation in a voice of intense scorn.

"I am in danger from another creature in the semi-blaze of man. Thank you; oh, thank you!"

"You are in one of your mocking humours; it is no use to try to talk reason with you," Miss Lyle said, and calmly retreated within, leaving my lady to indulge her capricious meditations alone.

She remained leaning upon the broad marble

balustrade, scarcely altering her position for a long time, till the sun dropped behind a purple mass of clouds, and the night was closing in chill and dark, but not more than her face.

A step sounded on the pavement. She started violently as she looked up, and saw the very eyes of which she had been thinking, watching her—the frank, glancing, brown eyes of Captain Evelyn.

He came forward instantly, extending his hand.

"I am glad to find you here, Lady Violet. I had something to say to you, if you will permit me."

The slight huskiness in the captain's usually clear, joyous tones, told my lady's apprehensive heart what was coming. In a sudden impulse of cowardice, she moved towards the open drawing-room windows; but the gallant guardman stopped her, extending his arm with a courteous, but resolute air, and a flash of the brown eyes that made the black orbs flinch for the moment. Lady Violet's white lids dropped for an instant; then she rallied again.

"Let him speak," she thought, "and have it over, since he will not be warned." And slightly setting her teeth, she looked up.

"Well," she said, quietly.

And upon that the captain spoke—not exactly the words she expected to hear, however.

"I am not the man to plead with a woman whose heart is full of another," he said, his voice calm enough now; "as, if that is what you fear, Lady Violet, be at peace. Still, I have something to say to you—more, that after to-night we may not meet again for years."

The hand upon his arm grew cold.

"My regiment is ordered to India. I come to-night to say 'good-bye' and—"

"To India!" The beautiful face was ghastly, even in that dim light. "Then we shall never meet again. It is a long 'good-bye' you have come to take, Captain Evelyn." And in spite of her determination a heavy sigh struggled to her trembling lips.

"Long!" repeated he, looking down at the vivid face with a despairing thrill. "My lady, I'm glad you don't know how long it will be to me."

She understood him. Besides, her own emotion was stifling her. But she would not yield to it. With a last, desperate effort she lifted her great eyes and looked at him, breathing hard as she drew her hand from his arm, and stepped back.

"I wish you a pleasant journey," she said, in a jarred voice; "and I hope the Sepoy won't—won't—"

In the midst of the hollow speech voice and sight failed her. She caught wildly at the balustrade, and Captain Evelyn was only in time to save her hand from striking the marble as she fell.

"She loves me," he thought, as the white, unconscious face fell over his arm. "She does love me, try as she may to hide it."

He stood still, with the slight form clasped close, the long black curls trailing over his arm, while the moon crept silvery into view, and shone on the carven face he was watching with set lips. His heart was beating like a trip-hammer, his breath came heavily, and my lady's swoon was a long one. But he was patient.

"It seems cruel," he murmured; "but it's my last chance."

A silken skirt rustled near that very moment, and the one woman he would have chosen not to see, because he felt her hostility to him intuitively, glided up beside him, in the moonlight.

"Has anything happened?" asked Eleanor Lyle, in a voice of cool inquiry. "Ah!"—as she saw the still, white face on his arm, and she peered into the guardman's agitated countenance with a glance of keen scrutiny.

"Lady Violet has fainted," he answered, returning her glance; "that is all—and she is better already. Will you do me a great favour, Miss Lyle—will you leave me alone with Lady Violet ten minutes?"

"If she wishes it, Captain Evelyn—I doubt if she does," responded Eleanor.

The guardman's brown eyes flashed. Then as my lady raised her head and looked in bewilderment from one to the other, he condescended to one more appeal, a thrill of wild pain in his voice, that smote even Eleanor. "I entreat you, Miss Lyle—I leave on the night-train—I am ordered to India!"

Over Eleanor's face passed a swift change.

To Lady Violet came staggering realisation with the words. It helped to recall her strength and consciousness now, just as it had banished both a little before.

"Are you better, dear?" asked Eleanor, in a mean-ing voice, as she took her hand. "Are you well enough to hear Captain Evelyn now? He wishes to speak with you. Shall I go and leave you with him?"

Lady Violet leaned heavily on Eleanor, and ex-

tended a hand to Captain Evelyn. Her face was like carved alabaster, her large, intensely mournful eyes were lifted to his in a solemn gaze.

"Good-bye," she said, "good-bye; it is better to say it, so believe it."

The guardsman's brow contracted.

"Then I will speak here in Miss Lyle's presence," he said, sternly. "Lady Violet, do you love me?"

He put the question like a soldier, resolute to dare his fate.

Eleanor felt Lady Violet's hand tightened upon her shoulder.

"Remember Conway," she whispered, suddenly in her ear.

My lady caught her breath slightly as she looked up again at Captain Evelyn.

"No!" she said, with sudden, half-childish bitterness. (She was only fifteen, remember, though she looked so much older), "if I must tell you—no. Take me in, Eleanor."

The soldier's big chest swelled, his very lips turned white as the two moved away slowly.

Half way across the terrace Lady Violet stopped.

"You will not go without speaking to papa?" she called back to him, faintly.

Captain Evelyn sprang forward.

"I cannot," he said, brokenly, "not now; I saw him first; I was to come back if—but that is past. Stay, one moment, my lady, only one. Something tells me we shall meet again some day; it may not be for years, but whenever it may be, in one year or fifty, you will only have to look in my face to know that I still love you."

Before Lady Violet could speak, if she had wished, he had turned and ran swiftly down the terrace steps.

All this time Lady Violet's governess had been away nursing her aged mother, who lay very ill.

Among all who loved the wayward, beautiful girl, there was not a more devoted heart than that which beat in the bosom of Miss Meggs, the little pale, meek-eyed governess.

Two years already—ever since the installation at Eaglecliffe, indeed, she had been alternately snubbed and petted by my lady, and the petting was so sweet to the poor soul, whom nobody had ever loved before but her old mother, that her intractable, adored pupil might have tyrannized over her in the most abominable manner twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four, and still have been worshipped for the crumb of sweetness doled out at the last. If Meggs had never left Eaglecliffe, there is no knowing how many unhappy things might not have happened.

She was back now, and Lady Violet was again her pupil, and rarely docile, a changed being in every way. Lady Violet, indeed, with all that surplus energy, those wild spirits of hers, recollecting on herself, needed occupation, and welcomed the resumption of the old round of duties with feverish eagerness.

The family went, about this time, down to Heathcote, another seat of the earl's in Wales. It was Lady Violet who entreated for the change. The Cliffs had grown hateful to her.

At Heathcote six years passed—six years which made Eleanor Lyle haggard and old before her time. Six years which only ripened and developed the marvellous loveliness of Lady Violet.

In all that time, no word had come to her of Conway, and she did not know yet that he was all this time sojourning in Australia, instead of on the Continent. No pains had been spared to conceal from her the truth, and the effort had succeeded.

CHAPTER IX.

THEY RETURNED TO EAGLECLIFFE IN MAY.

The earl would have liked to have his daughter presented at the queen's drawing-room long before this, and a suitable chaperone would have been readily forthcoming. He imagined the sensation the peerless girl would create, and painted with a fancy hand the pleasure of London fashionable high life.

But Lady Violet, though she did not seem untouched by the picture, showed an invincible reluctance to the proposition, and not having, with years, outgrown her impertinence, her will was still the law it had always been to her indulgent and doting father.

Eleanor Lyle's absence from Heathcote during the interval of their stay there, had been somewhat protracted and mysterious.

She always said she had been to visit friends. But, if so, it must have been a visit rather of duty than pleasure, for, sad and dispirited as she went, she returned still more broken and forlorn.

Lord Eaglecliffe decided, in his own mind, that it was some family difficulty which took her away, and made some attempt to obtain her confidence, in the hope of benefiting her, but in vain.

One evening, when they had been at Eaglecliffe about three months, Miss Lyle came out of the house alone, a costly shawl draped carelessly about her shapely shoulders, her manner nervous and hurried. She took the path along which we have followed her twice before.

She had not often, of late, expended so much care upon her toilette, as this evening. But in spite of the rich and handsome dress, the carefully arranged braids, in spite of the feverish lustre of cheek and eye, Eleanor looked haggard and old.

"He is not here," she exclaimed in a tone of bitter disappointment, as she stopped in a clump of alders, and looked eagerly about her. "Oh! my heart, how hard it is to wait."

The next instant a tall white-faced man rose from the grass where he had been lounging with a cigar, and with a hysterical cry, Eleanor darted forward and threw her arms about him.

He seemed rather to permit her embrace than to return it, and disengaged himself coolly enough from the first possible moment. Eleanor stood looking at him and recovering herself.

"It is like heaven to see you again, Vane," she said.

"What there is left of me," grumbled Vane Conway, for it was indeed he, but looking the bad shadow of himself.

That was the mystery of Eleanor Lyle's absences from Heathcote. She had been getting him a pardon. From the fact that it had taken her six years to accomplish it, something might be guessed of the obstacles she had had to encounter, and had conquered.

Meanwhile, convict life had altered the fine gentleman a little.

There was a broad scar across his left cheek, drawing his left eye to one side (those dangerous eyes of Vane Conway's), and his hair and beard had not yet rallied from that close cropping to their pristine luxuriance and beauty.

"What there is left of me," he grumbled, as though Eleanor had been to blame for not getting his pardon sooner.

"It seemed very long, didn't it, dear?" Eleanor said, wistfully, her hands tightly wrung together. This man, who owed her so much, had not said a kind word to her yet.

"Deuced long," with his hands in his pockets. "How's all?" with a nod in the direction of the mansion. "Well? Lady Violet, too. I shall want to see her to-morrow night, at this time; and you needs come with her either."

Eleanor's sigh was almost a groan.

"How changed you are, Vane!"

"Changed?" he snarled, flinging himself down on the grass again; "if you had been where I have, you would be changed too."

He lay silently watching the gray sky above him, while Eleanor looked on, and wondered if this sulky, ill-tempered fellow could ever have been that exquisite fine gentleman, Vane Conway. Suddenly, she dropped upon her knees in the grass by his side.

"You'll never be anything but yourself to me, Vane, however you may change for other people," she said, kissing his forehead gently.

He moved his head impatiently away from the caresses. Then he sat up and looked at her.

"I am not the only one that has changed, Miss Lyle," he sneered. "You look ten years older than you did when I went away. Ten years—twenty, more like! You might be your own grandmother. I hope my little Violet hasn't lost her good looks this way. Has the lady of the Cliffs grown ugly, my queen?"

Eleanor Lyle's eyes were fixed upon him in speechless darkening wrath. Good heavens! was this what she had longed and waited for at Vane Conway's coming? Was this the gratitude she had wrung her very heart's blood out drop by drop to win?

"How fares the captain?" he demanded, presently. "The handsome captain, who was in love with our dark-eyed young siren of Eaglecliffe. I shall spoil some fun for him, I hope."

"I wish he might outwit you yet. If I could help him any, he should, too," Miss Lyle said, bitterly. Conway's air of diehard indifference vanished as he rose to his feet, and stood looking at her like some stirred and angry demon.

"If you help Gilderey Evelyn by so much as a hair's breadth," he said, in a voice of suppressed passion, "you help him to his doom. I'll murder him and you too. Do you hear that?"

"I hear you," Eleanor Lyle said, with calm scorn, uplifting her proud head and looking at him steadily. "You waste time, Vane, when you threaten me. I am neither a convict nor a coward."

Conway looked at her scornfully. He began to see that he had gone too far, and though it was not at all what he liked to do in his wild and savage humour, he dissembled from necessity.

"I don't know what you mean, by taking me up in that way," he said, sulkily. "I never thought you'd turn against me, Eleanor, whatever others did."

"I haven't turned against you," she answered, quietly. "I don't owe you kindness or forbearance, but I shan't turn against you unless you oblige me to. Don't threaten me, though, and don't imagine I'll help you to victimise Lady Violet."

"Have you told her how matters really are?" he questioned, eagerly.

"No; I don't know how matters are. If I had known she should have been told long ago. Who is Lady Violet's husband, Vane?"

His wicked eyes glittered, and he stroked the stump beard he was cultivating with complacency.

"I didn't expect you to tell," Eleanor resumed; "it's of no consequence. Once she knows the truth it will be easy enough discovering who she married that night. I remember what you said beforehand about him."

Conway's eyes were on the ground.

"I was only trying you, Nelly," he said, in a constrained voice. "Give me time to find out whether he still lives, and where he is, and you shall know as much as I do."

Eleanor regarded him sceptically, and drew back, when he would have embraced her.

"Well, well," he said, with an air of resignation, "I don't blame you; but come here a week from this, and you shall know who Lady Violet's husband is, and have proof of my sincerity and love for you beside."

Eleanor's foolish heart leaped at his deceitful words.

"Vane," she spoke, in a low voice, as he was turning away.

He stopped.

"You must need money," extending a heavy purse, through whose silken meshes gold-pieces gleamed.

"Conway took it with affected reluctance. "I do need it," he said, "but I am ashamed to take it."

"You need not," she exclaimed, eagerly.

"Are you sure you can spare it?"

"Quite sure," she smiled. "I never use a quarter of my salary. Lord Eaglecliffe is very generous with me."

"Good night then, once more. You won't send me off now without a kiss, Nelly?"

The girl yielded to his clasp with a half sob.

"My dearest," whispered she, in passionate agitation, "if you would only be true to me, if you only would."

He kissed her hurriedly.

"A week from to-night you shall see," he said.

Miss Lyle turned slowly towards the house. Her lover's kiss was warm on her lips. He had left her with such loving words as he had not spoken since those early days of their acquaintance, when he had sat at her feet, so to speak, and had called the loving light of her handsome eyes the only lode-star he wanted.

He had held her in his arms just now, and hinted of a future, that to her would have been a simple paradise shared with him, disgrace felon as he was.

But for all that, her heart lay like lead in her bosom, and she had never felt such a cold creeping distrust of him, as she did at this moment.

(To be continued.)

THERE is a possibility of the Government providing means of transit to and from stations on the Mediterranean for about sixty observers, who may be willing to take part in the observation of the total eclipse of December 22, 1870; and that persons willing to undertake a portion of the observation, on a plan to be arranged by the Council of the Royal Astronomical Society, be invited to send their names to the secretaries, and also to state the branch of observation which they would be prepared, or prefer, to undertake, and the instruments they would be willing to contribute. It is desirable that the names of those who are willing to take part in the observation of the eclipse should be sent in at once.

A CURE FOR HYDROPHOBIA.—Having read lately almost daily accounts of death from hydrophobia, I beg to submit, with your permission, to the readers of your valuable paper the following, which I have had by me for the last four years. When this announcement first appeared in the *Leipzig Journal* I cannot inform you. "A Saxon forester, by name Gastell, now of the venerable age of 82, unwilling to take to the grave with him a secret of so much import to mankind, had made public in the *Leipzig Journal* the means which he had used for 50 years, and wherewith he affirms he has rescued many fellow beings and cattle from the fearful death of hydrophobia. Take immediately, warm vinegar, wash the wound clean therewith,

and then dry it; pour then upon the wound a few drops of muriatic acid, because mineral acids destroy the poison of the saliva, by which means the evil effect of the latter is neutralised."—J.P.D.

SCIENCE.

It very often happens that fine steel engravings get stained with moisture on the wall, or speckled with mildew, and it becomes an important question how to bleach them. One of the best methods is to moisten them carefully and suspend them in a large vessel partially filled with ozone. The ozone bleaches them perfectly without attacking the fibre of the paper. For the evolution of ozone the simplest way would be to clean pieces of phosphorus and place them, half covered with water, in the bottom of the jar in which the pictures are suspended. On a large scale, a Ruhmkorff coil and constant discharge of electricity would be preferable. It is somewhat surprising that this method of cleaning fibres has not been more generally applied.

SIEMENS'S STEEL.—Among the articles exhibited at Sir Edward Sabine's conversazione were Mr. C. W. Siemens's specimens of steel, which have not yet had the notice they so well deserve; they represented the metal in various forms and conditions, and in different stages of manufacture. The process by which this steel is produced may be briefly stated thus:—Good haematite ore and spathic ore are mixed and treated with carbonaceous materials, by which their total or partial reduction into metallic iron is effected. This metallic iron is then subjected to very intense heat on the open hearth of a Siemens regenerative gas-furnace, and in certain given quantities, or series of instalments, is dropped into a bath of cast iron previously prepared in the furnace. This operation is continued until the requisite degree of decarbonization is arrived at; and manganese is added in the form of ore or of Spiegeleisen. The quantity of molten metal thus produced in one charge is about four tons: it is tipped into a ladle, and poured into iron moulds in the usual way, and forms steel of the highest quality. To those acquainted with the ordinary way of making steel the superiority of this process will be manifest, while as regards cost it effects a great saving. One ton of steel ingots may be produced with a ton and a half of cheap small coal. The ordinary Sheffield process requires from five to six tons of fuel for one ton of steel. The new process is now actively carried on at the Landore-Siemens Steel Company's Works, near Swansea.

ROYAL INSTITUTION.

Professor Grant has delivered his second lecture on "The Astronomy of Comets." He commenced by referring to the feeling of superstitions fear with which comets were regarded in the earlier periods of history. The circumstance was accompanied by one advantage to science. It had the effect of inducing persons of discernment to note in each case the apparent path pursued by the strange body in the heavens, and although such delineations were in all cases very rude, still, in several instances they have enabled modern astronomers to determine roughly the orbit of the comet, and in this manner have supplied materials for investigating the interesting question of the identity of the comet with some earlier or later apparition of a similar kind. While the great comet of 1856 was exciting general alarm throughout Europe, astronomers had begun to watch attentively the apparitions of those bodies, and had already arrived at an interesting result. It was remarked that the tails of comets are invariably turned towards the regions of the heavens which is opposite to the sun. This discovery is due to Peter Appian, German astronomer who had based his conclusion upon the observation of several comets observed between the years 1531 and 1533.

The lecturer here remarked that Appian had been anticipated by the Chinese, who had remarked the same fact as early as the year 837 A.D., on the occasion of the apparition of a great comet in that year. Professor Grant next proceeded to give an explanation of two of the most important results which had been achieved in cometary astronomy. The first of these had reference to the fact that comets are celestial bodies like the planets or stars, and not mere meteors generated in the atmosphere, as the ancient philosophers supposed; the second is that comets are governed in their movements by the same great law of attraction which controls the planets in their orbits. The first of these results is due to the Danish astronomer, Tycho Brahe; the second is due to Newton. Tycho Brahe's researches were based upon the observations of a great comet which appeared in his time, the comet of 1577. This is one of the few comets recorded in history which have been seen with the naked eye in the day time in full sunshine. By a comparison of his own observations of the comet with contempor-

neous observations made by several astronomers in Germany, Tycho Brahe concluded that the comet was at least three times further removed from the earth than the moon is. Comets have always since been regarded as celestial bodies, and the name of Tycho Brahe is imperishably associated with the definitive establishment of this great fact.

In order to acquire a more just appreciation of the difficulties which offered themselves to Newton when he commenced his researches on the movements of comets, the lecturer gave a sketch of the previous course of Newton's studies in connection with his grand discovery of gravitation. He next pointed out the peculiar difficulties which the theory of cometary motion offers to the astronomer. These arise from the short visibility of the comet, the great eccentricity of its orbit, and the complication of its apparent motion with the orbital motion of the earth. Newton, however, triumphed over all these difficulties. His researches were based on the observations of the comet of 1680, one of the most splendid which has ever visited the earth, either in ancient or modern times. He demonstrated by evidence of the most conclusive kind that the orbit described by the comet was a parabola, in the focus of which the sun was situated, and that the comet, as it revolved round the sun, described equal areas in equal times, in accordance with the second of Kepler's celebrated laws of planetary motion. It was manifest, therefore, that the movement of the comet was governed by the attractive force of the sun. Professor Grant concluded by quoting a passage indicative of the opinion which Newton entertained respecting the orbits really described by comets. He supposed that although the orbits of comets were sensibly parabolic, they might be in reality elliptical, seeing that a very eccentric ellipse sensibly coincided with a parabola towards the perihelion; and he remarked that the major axis and period of time of a comet revolving in an elliptic orbit of great eccentricity might be ascertained by comparing together the apparitions of comets having the same orbital elements. This subtle prophetic conjecture, worthy of the genius of Newton, was destined to be realized in the following century.

ELEGANcies OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

THERE is something ludicrous and yet painful in the manner in which our language is murdered by many in their attempts to speak what is too often erroneously called "elegant English." I will say nothing about the introduction of words derived from Greek, Latin, or modern languages, as this simply implies the need of an amount of education possessed by few, and virtually renders many books, and indeed conversation, unintelligible to the mass; but the words of a writer as far back as the days of Queen Elizabeth will best convey my meaning. He says:

"Not a few do greatly seek to stain our language by fond affectation of strange words, presuming that to be the best English which is corrupted with external terms of eloquence, and sound of many syllables."

Had the old Chronicler been a foreteller of future events, he could hardly have come nearer the mark in our own days; for the use of absurdly elegant English is confined not to a few, but is broadcast amongst every class; though, generally speaking, the greater the ignorance, the finer the language. Indeed, save amongst people of good breeding and good education, who generally use great simplicity in conversation and writing, and the uneducated labourer, whose words in many parts of England are simple and pure Saxon-English, we meet with it in the writings and speeches of every class. While labourers' children and Eton boys "begin their holidays," the young gentlemen of Mr. Robinson's Academy "commence their vacation." A newspaper advertisement announces, "the lady of Hiram Dolittle, Esq., of a son." Mr. Dolittle, of course, cannot use the word wife; it is not genteel.

Horace Smith defined the title of Esquire, which everybody now gives to everybody, and expects himself in return, "as a title very much in use among vulgar people." A gentleman named Devereux had a footman named William Good, and one morning there came a letter to the house, directed "William Good, Esq., at Mr. Devereux."

A retired shopkeeper, the other day, being asked if one John — were not lately dead, answered, "Yes, sir, he is recently deceased." Others make long words "do duty" for wit: thus, a well-known writer translates "not to holla till we are out of the wood" into "not to give vent to vociferations till we have emerged from the forest." Boys are often called "the juvenile portion of the community." Certain writers, chiefly in cheap papers, will persist in calling a fire "the destructive or devastating element;" in speaking of letters as "epistolary advices;" of marrying a woman as "leading her to the hymeneal altar." Instead of dying, a man "expires;" a house is a "residence,"

and a shop an "establishment;" a horse doctor is a "veterinary surgeon;" an author a "literary gentleman;" a farmer an "agriculturist."

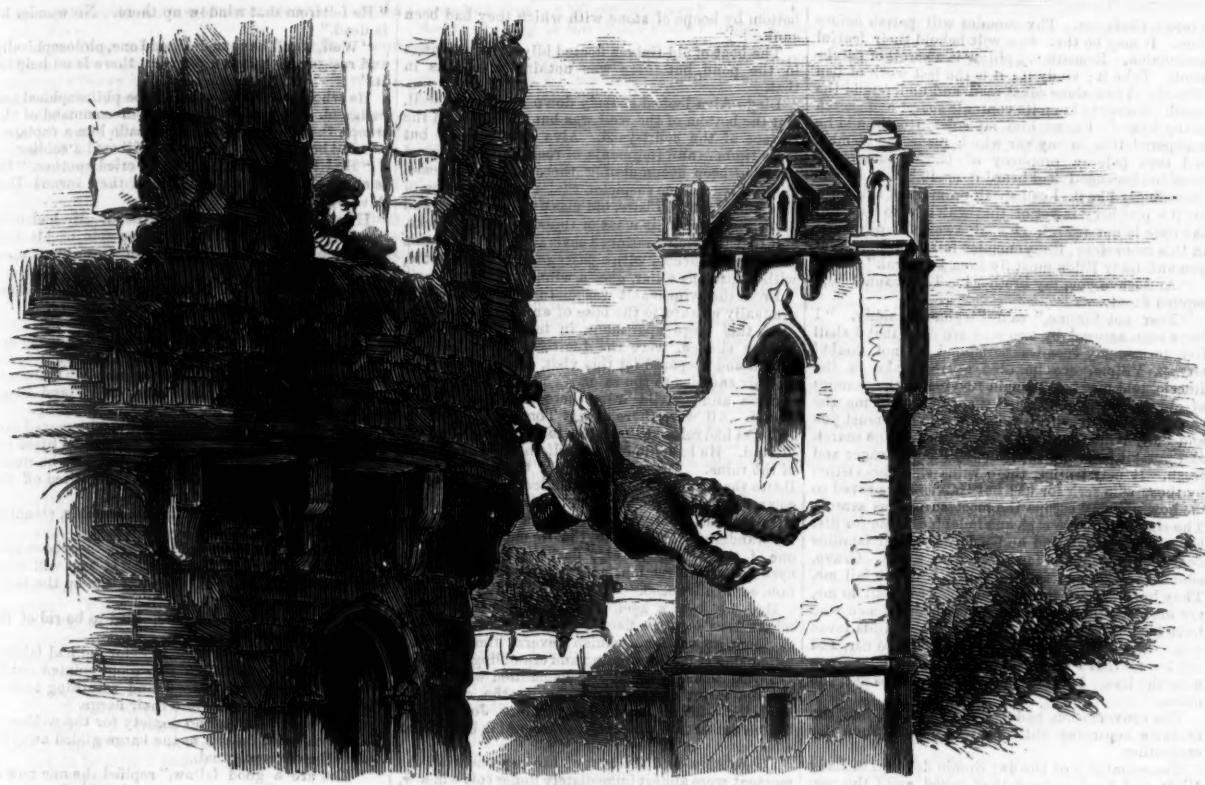
One of our popular writers cuts up this nonsense famously. Instead of "When the cat's away the mice will play," he proposes to read, "In the absence of the feline race, the mice give themselves up to various pastimes;" and "Old birds are not caught with chaff," is rendered, "Feathered bipeds of advanced age are not to be entrapped with the outer husks of corn." Dean Alford somewhere remarks: "Many, without doubt, use fine English because they have never considered and never been told how foolish it is, and how much more expressive and beautiful is real Saxon-English." In plainer terms, Fuller says, "To clothe low creeping matter with high-flown language is not fine fancy, but flat folly;" and the following advice from a well-known author is worthy of attention:—"When you doubt between two words, choose the plainest, the commonest, the most idiomatic. Eschew fine words as you would rouge; love simple ones as you would native roses on your cheeks."

A NATIVE, a weaver by trade, said to be 125 years old, has just died in Hyderabad, Scinde.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.—Under the auspices of the council of the Working Men's Club Union, Saturday visits have been made, one to the Egyptian Department of the British Museum, another to the geological collection; and on the last visit Professor Flower, conservator of the magnificent museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, received about fifty of the working men of the metropolis, to whom he delivered three lectures, explanatory of human and comparative osteology. The visits paid on Saturday to the British Museum force the repetition of the inquiry, why is the British Museum not open to the public on Saturday always? It is the only day on which a large number of persons have any chance of going about. The officers of the British Museum should seek to keep up with the times.

FURTHER OPENING OF NATIONAL GALLERY AND BRITISH MUSEUM.—In the House of Commons, on a motion for going into committee of supply, Mr. W. Allen submitted a motion in favour of opening the National Gallery and certain portions of the British Museum for the inspection of the public between the hours of seven and ten p.m., at least three evenings a week. The hon. gentleman had estimated the cost of lighting the National Gallery at 4,000*l* per annum, and the British Museum at 6,000*l*, making a total sum of 10,000*l*. per annum. After some discussion, during which it was stated, on the part of the trustees, that the buildings were not constructed with the view of being lighted with gas, the Chancellor of the Exchequer reminded the House that a new National Gallery would in fullness of time be constructed in Trafalgar Square, and that perhaps a portion of the national treasures would be removed from Bloomsbury to a new building at South Kensington, and that both edifices might be so planned as to remove the obstacles to the introduction of gas which existed in the old ones, Mr. Alderman Lawrence having suggested that the British Museum should be opened every evening of the week during the summer months.

SUGAR POISONING.—We have received from Cheltenham a sample of sugar, so fearfully adulterated with chromate of lead, that we wonder how any of the unfortunate partakers of it survived to tell the tale. The sugar in question appears to be what is known in the trade as "pieces," to which the chromate of lead has apparently been added, with the intention of bringing up the inferior article to the appearance of the best Demerara. The attempt, however, has been made so clumsily that the naked eye at once detects the mixture, the lead being in lumps large enough to allow of its being picked out by the fingers. Appended to the sample is a somewhat remarkable document, in the shape of a series of printed apologies, from the grocers who sold the sugar in Cheltenham, the wholesale dealer in Bristol who supplied the article, and the refiner who manufactured it. We think that none of the parties implicated emerge very creditably from the transaction, although the retail tradesmen declared that they knew nothing about it—the Bristol dealer says the same—while the refiner also pleads innocence, oddly enough imputing the mischief to "some experiments tried by the manager of his works" about the time that the goods were delivered. We are curious to know where was the necessity for trying experiments on an article like sugar, which we buy in the full belief that it is perfectly pure; and for what reason a dangerous material like chromate of lead happens to be in the refinery at all. We presume that the case was brought before the magistrates to be dealt with in open court, so that the Cheltenham residents, who have the reputation of paying good long prices for their provisions, might at all events know what to eat, drink, and avoid.—*Food Journal*.



[TOSCA'S REVENGE.]

STONIO.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE meeting of the duke and Stonio was cordial, though the latter did not suspect the relationship between them; Galvez and Carlos, at the desire of the duke, having taken care that the recognition of Stephano Villota by Pietro and Sanchez took place without the knowledge of Stonio.

The latter presented to the duke, whom as yet he knew only as Distro Demetrios the astronomer, the letter of which mention has been made. The duke, after a perusal of it, said calmly:

"My English friend asks me to aid you in some grave matter, and I will do so willingly, but not to-night. I must have repose, my son. I am greatly exhausted by the cares and events of the past two days. So good-night, and no thanks for the service I have already done you."

Carlos made haste to attract the attention and presence of Stonio elsewhere, and the duke, with his attendants, were well cared for by Galvez.

Ullima, having been cautioned by her husband, devoted herself to the comfort and repose of Lady Hilda.

On the following day, after all had partaken of the plain but plentiful fare provided by Galvez and his wife, the duke led Stonio apart, and requesting his attention, related to him the history of the Villota family from its earliest annals, briefly to the time of the last duke, when his narrative was more minute.

As the reader has become acquainted with the main points of this history, we need not repeat all that the outlawed duke told to Stonio.

"Count Pedro," said the duke, "thus accomplished the destruction of the Villotas; of which family you say you suspect you are a member. As I told you, Gomez Villota was burned at the stake; the old duke died; the elder brother of the three sons escaped. There was an infant Villota. I will speak of him presently; or why not of him now? This infant Villota was confided by the dying duke to the care of three men."

"Of three men!" exclaimed Stonio, who had paid eager attention to all that had been said.

"To three men, trusted servitors of the Villota family, by name Carlos Romago—"

"Ah, Carlos Romago!" cried Stonio, his heart leaping to his mouth.

"Pietro Gallazi—"

"Pietro Gallazi!" echoed the excited listener, pale and trembling.

"And Sanchez de Rema."

"Good heaven! the names of the three faithful men who have cared for me all my life."

"And thou art he who was the infant Villota," said the duke, calmly. "Thou art Fernando Villota, Marquis de Lota. Go tell this in Lisbon, and the enemies of thy race will be speedy in the effort to compass thy death. The Villota name is outlawed and accursed. Oh, my brother!" exclaimed the duke, no longer able to control his emotions, and casting his arms around Stonio's neck, "embrace me, embrace me, for I am thy brother, Stephano Villota!"

We leave to the imagination of the reader the amazement and joy of Stonio.

The first transports of this recognition having passed, the duke related his own history, from the time he disappeared from Portugal.

As it has little to do with our story, we give it briefly, thus:

Flying from the vindictive hate of the enemies of his house, and ignorant of the success of his scheme to deceive them into the belief that he had perished in the mountains, he had fled to Russia. There he entered the army, and served against the Turks. Captured by the Turks, he was for some years a slave of a wealthy Moslem, who, however, while vigilant against his escape from captivity, treated him with much kindness, and being a famous scholar and student, was delighted to find his captive a man of science. Years passed on, and Stephano, who had no desire to return to Portugal, unless with power to wreak vengeance upon his enemies, and treated by Ben Ahmed more as a brother than a captive, gradually became absorbed in the study of science and its mysteries. At length Ben Ahmed died, leaving to his captive freedom and immense wealth in precious gems, collected from every part of the world.

His friend and benefactor being dead, the outlawed noble resolved to return to Europe and Christendom, under the name of Distro Demetrios, and in the character of a learned Greek.

For a time he lived in Constantinople, and, travelling thence, he visited every part of Europe except Portugal, devoting all his mind to scientific pursuits.

Naturally this ennobling life destroyed his once violent desire for vengeance upon the enemies of his house. In studying the great mysteries of creation, his mind soared above the petty affairs of baser

men; and long before the death of Ben Ahmed left him at liberty to return to Europe, if ever his thoughts reverted to Lisbon his memory revealed recollections only to be grieved over, or to be despised.

On his return to Europe, he investigated eagerly the progress and research of all scientific and inventive minds, and, gifted far in advance of the age, made discoveries and produced results which caused the superstitions to bestow upon him the title of The Wizard.

Finally he settled in Rome, where, having gained esteem and friendship, he pursued his studies with unabated vigour.

"And now," he said, after a review of his life, "you wonder, my brother, why I have returned to Portugal. Not for love, not for hate. True, there is one in Lisbon whom I once loved—I mean the mother of the Prince Enrique."

"The mother of Prince Enrique!" said Stonio.

"She is nothing to me now, nor has she been for many a year," replied the duke calmly. "The prince is at the head of a plot against the king—a plot divulged to me by one Allinti, a few days ago. Allinti is, or was—for I heard yesterday he was dead—a secretary of the royal palace. He sought me, believing, as many do, that Distro Demetrios is a wizard. His wish was to learn if some great affair in which he had an important part to play would be a success. I contrived to learn his secret, and by cunning questioning learned enough to warrant me in believing that a great conspiracy for a revolution was afoot. I have made use of this knowledge in leaving Lisbon. Prince Enrique and others, whose freedom would have been very dangerous to me, were under arrest when I left the city. But why did I leave Rome, where I was honoured, to come to Portugal, where I am outlawed and accursed? Because of a prophecy."

"A prophecy!" repeated Stonio, amazed. "By whom?"

"Ben Ahmed. He was a wise and learned man, and learned in the lore of his Arabian ancestors. He was descended from a line of sages, a line of eminent astrologers and astronomers, running back beyond the time when the wise men of the East beheld the star of Bethlehem. All that I first learned in astronomy was a mere smattering compared to the lore taught me by Ben Ahmed. As he was dying, he took my hand in his, and whispered: 'Bend near to me, my brother. I have a prophecy to make to thee. Swear never to reveal it to any living man or woman. When it is accomplished, if thou livest, thou mayest speak of it to others. I know thy history and thy

wrongs, Christian. Thy enemies will perish before thee. It may be that thou wilt behold their fearful destruction. Beneath my pillow is a scroll of parchment. Take it; study it; it is the last work of Ben Ahmed. Thou alone canst read and understand the scroll. Swear to keep its contents secret and sacred in thy heart.' I gave him my solemn oath, and he whispered that in my ear which made me tremble and turn pale— prophecy of fearful import. I trembled because I had heard it made before, or one exceedingly like it. I can speak no more of this now, for the prophecy is yet of that which is to be. But the time is not far off. I shall await the day here, in this monastery, if my enemies fail to find me. But you and Lady Hilda must fly from Portugal."

"And leave you, my brother! That cannot be," replied Stonio.

"Fear not for me," said Stephano, calmly. "I have been assured by two who are dead that I shall live to see my enemies perish. I do not doubt! Gomes Villota, ere he died at the stake in the Ruccio, told me that I should survive all the enemies of our house. Ben Ahmed, in dying, told me the same. I know it will be thus. Not to-day must you and Lady Hilda continue your flight. The search and pursuit in every direction will be too eager and fresh. It may be that these ruins shall be visited by those who seek for us; but Galvez has proved to me how we may escape the most suspicious search. The six Indians are each one indebted to me for life. Each one is a husband and a father—their families dependent upon me for support in Rome. Grave, silent, capable, and faithful, they will not fail me. They have served me for years. Leave all to me, my brother—to me and the noble-hearted men who have been to you three fathers. Lady Hilda loves you. She is of our blood. Now go to her, and tell her all that I have told you. She will love you none the less. I wish to speak with Carlos and the others."

The conversation had lasted for hours, and the brothers separated with hearts full of love for each other.

The remainder of the day Stonio devoted to Lady Hilda, and hand-in-hand they roved amid the vast area of the ruined monastery, but ever careful not to permit themselves to be seen upon the crumbling walls by any one upon the river.

Great was the amazement in the royal council when the flight of Distro Demetrius was proved beyond all doubt.

Allinti being dead, and no Cardinal Braganza to be found, the charges against those who fell under arrest fell to the ground, and when it became known that Distro Demetrius had befriended the outlawed stone-cutter, and that Lady Hilda had disappeared with the stone-cutter, Prince Enrique, Count Pedro, and Diego Alva were released from arrest.

Keeping to themselves their belief that Distro Demetrius was the outlawed Stephano Villota, they added their individual exertions to the eager search made by the royal and civil authorities to capture the fugitives. Immense rewards were offered, and every means imaginable were set in motion.

The effects left by the astronomer in the house he had recently occupied, his rich and costly furniture, and his rare collection of antiques and scientific instruments were seized and conveyed to the royal palace.

Search, too, was made for Silva, the confectioner. But no tidings of his fate, nor of the fate of Estella Le Montez could be obtained.

Great rewards were offered for the apprehension of Torsa and Torsetta. The spies, officers, and all the complicated and cunning machinery of the inquisitorial system, were set at work.

All in vain. Days passed on, and Diego Alva grew lean and thin and cadaverous, with rage and fear. Count Pedro alone was contented. In the first place he did not believe Distro Demetrius was Stephano Villota. The impression that such might be true faded utterly from his mind. Secondly, he had not the slightest belief that the stone-cutter Stonio was Fernando Villota. Thirdly, he was rejoiced at the disappearance of Lady Hilda. He now had full control of the Montredores estates, or rather the estates reverted to him.

Prince Enrique, devoured by rage, chagrin, and jealousy, pressed by clamorous creditors, who no longer saw a chance of having their claims liquidated by the wealth of Lady Hilda, grew fierce, morose and melancholy.

Joan Britto and Diego Alva were the most constant in the search for traces of the fugitives.

They, with a strong party, visited the ruined monastery, to find no one there except Galvez and Ullima, who had always lived there. Not a trace of the fugitives. Diego Alva and his friends did not search the bottom of the pond. If they had, they would have found two boats, held to the muddy

bottom by heaps of stone with which they had been sunk.

The boat of old Galvez floated idly at its moorings in the pond, but there was nothing suspicious in that.

Diego Alva looked sharply down into an old well. But the bottom of the well was but ten feet from the surface of the court-yard. Alva saw nothing but loose timbers and fragments of rock, which appeared to have been accumulating there for many years. Diego Alva had no suspicion that a stout platform of logs and stout iron bars, old massive iron doors and gates, supported this mass of timber and loose rocks, and that the well continued several feet beneath this platform, connected with a passage, long and narrow, with a spacious cellar, once a wine-vault.

From the wine-vault was another passage leading gradually upward to the base of an old tower.

In this large apartment, in total darkness and intense silence, were the fugitives, who had expected and prepared for this visit, or any other visit of their enemies to the ruins.

Silva and Estella were there also, gagged and bound. All were there except Torsa.

Torsa had refused absolutely to bury himself underground. He had hidden himself in some other part of the ruins. It was not well for the spying Joan Britto that this was so. He strolled away from his comrades into a remote part of the ruins, leaving Alva and the others to pursue their search elsewhere. He wandered slowly up to the topmost chamber of one of the ruined towers, flashing his suspicious eyes in every direction, except one—that is, behind him, as he advanced.

Had he kept a keen vigilance in his rear, he might have seen the fierce eyes and swarthy visage of Torsa appear and vanish several times, as he toiled slowly up the winding and crumbling stairway.

There was a tall, narrow, dismantled window, in the old tower chamber, overlooking the coursed walls below—fully a hundred feet below. Joan Britto looked out at this window, leaning on his hands and elbows.

Diego Alva and the rest of the searchers at the moment were almost immediately under this window, when Torsa grasped Joan Britto's heel with his powerful hands, and shot him headlong out.

It was done in an instant. Britto had hardly time to know that he was assailed before there was nothing between him and the broken pavement below, but a hundred feet of air!

He had time, however, to turn his head—to recognize Torsa—to shriek! That was all. And in the next instant he was whirling over and over in the air, round and round, going down—shrieking! It was horrible, but it was all over in an instant. Torsa was too prudent to look after his victim. He had no doubt that he had made an end of him, and darted away, going down the crumbling spiral stairway with the speed and lightness of a squirrel; thinking, as he vanished like a goblin amid the ruins:

"Joan Britto was the most dangerous of all. Besides, he was always sneering at me and Torsetta. Ho! it is not safe to sneer at Torsa!"

But Torsa was yet to learn the consequences of his deed. Had he suspected the truth he would have grieved from ear to ear. He would have danced for joy. He would have yelled it.

As has been said, Diego Alva and his party were almost immediately beneath the window of the lofty tower. Suddenly Diego Alva went down on his face, his hands wide spread, with no idea of what had happened.

The others uttered a loud cry of horror, and for a moment, in speechless terror, glared at the sight before them.

There were two bodies before them: the bodies of Captain Britto and Diego Alva. The body of Captain Britto, which seemed to have dropped from the clouds, was upon its back, quivering, gasping, palpitating, like that of a frog or a toad when some cruel urchin has hurled it with all his strength against a stone.

But the body of Diego Alva was upon its face, as limp as wet hair, and as motionless.

The falling body of Joan Britto had struck Diego Alva on the shoulders, crushing him down, and bounding from him like a ball, ten feet away.

After the first moment of horror, their comrades ran to them. Being all soldiers of Britto, they sprang to him first. He was their captain. As for Diego Alva, he was nothing of any great value to them.

Britto was still quivering and gasping when his soldiers beat over him. He was conscious, too, and tried to say something; tried, but failed. His voice was a horrible gurgling, a voice choked with blood and pain. An instant more, and all his ambitions schemes were of the past.

"Our captain is dead," said one of the soldiers, staring at his fellows.

"True," said all, mournfully, and gazing upwards.

"He fell from that window up there. No wonder he is dead."

"Well, we all have to die," said one, philosophically and resigned. "It is a pity, but there is no help for it."

He who spoke could afford to be philosophical and resigned. He had been second in command of the troop; the death of Britto now made him a captain.

"But how is it with Don Alva?" said a soldier.

"Ho! I thought he was dead," cried another. "He is alive! Ho! Don Alva?" and they turned Don Alva upon his back.

He was very far from being dead. He had only been stunned and bruised, and one side of his face had been cut by the sharp edges of the stones upon which he had fallen.

"What is the matter? Oh, my left shoulder is cut all the place! Oh! What was it? What fell?"

A few words told him all.

"Oh, what a misfortune!" he said. "Help me up! Let us leave this accursed place. Oh, what is the matter with my legs? I cannot stand. I seem to have no legs. Oh, let me alone! Ah!" and Diego Alva sank back upon his back again, groaning.

It was very plain that he could not be moved into the barge. And then he would have to be lifted out again, on their return to the city. And then he would have to be put once more, and then lifted off the barge again.

The soldiers discussed all this sensibly, standing near Alva.

"Let him remain," said Galvez, in whose eyes glittered a strange fire of joy. "If you will carry him into one of my rooms, and put him on the bed, I will attend to him."

"Good!" cried the soldiers, glad to be rid of the case of a wounded man.

Alva said neither yes nor no, for he had fainted.

The soldiers carried him to a room pointed out by Galvez, placed him on a bed, and returning to their captain, lifted the body into their barge.

"You need be under no anxiety for the welfare of Don Alva," said Galvez, as the barge glided away towards the covered canal.

"You are a good fellow," replied the one now in command. "You are acquainted with Don Alva's patron?"

"You mean Count Pedro?"

"Yes; the royal treasurer."

"Oh, yes, very well. That is, I once was."

"Well, just take the matter off our hands, old man. You can visit the city to-morrow, and let the count know of the accident; if you will, you will save us a great deal of trouble."

"I will attend to Don Alva's case," replied Galvez, his eyes gleaming with a fire the soldiers little understood. "He is with those who know him!"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The barge, with the soldiers and the body of Joan Britto, glided from the monastery pond into the covered canal. Galvez left the courtyard, and clambered up to the top of the river wall. There he crouched behind a shattered battlement, and waited.

It was not many minutes before the barge again came in view, and floated upon the Tagus.

Galvez waited until it had gone nearly a mile towards the distant city; and then, assured that no more was to be feared from Captain Britto and his soldiers, returned to the courtyard, and placing a whistle to his lips, sounded it.

It was answered from a very remote part of the ruins, and soon after Galvez saw Torsa bounding towards him.

"Oh, I shall please him," thought Galvez, as he waited, smoking his pipe placidly. "I have news for him. But I will not tell him until we shall have opened a way for those down here."

And as Galvez was seated on the brink of the well we have mentioned, he cast a sharp glance into it.

Torsa was soon by his side. Galvez had not failed to notice that Torsa, as he ran towards him, glanced often towards the quarter of the courtyard in which Captain Britto had perished.

"Why do you stare over there, Torsa?"

"I wanted to see where he struck."

"Ho! then you saw him fall?"

"No; I did not. I would have enjoyed it."

"How, did you not see him fall? Then how did you know that he fell?" demanded Galvez, staring at Torsa.

"I know he fell, because I tossed him out of that window up there," replied Torsa, pointing upward.

"Did you see him fall, Galvez?"

"Ha! so you did that? Tell me all about it; as we open a way for our friends to come out."

While they laboured, tossing aside the rocks at the false bottom of the well, Torsa told of his adventure, and asked after his victim and the others,

having, however, no suspicion of what had befallen Don Alva.

"That Diego Alva is a very cunning fellow," said Torsa, as he made an opening in the platform, by tossing a heavy iron door aside. "He may return. Art sure he is well on his way to the city?"

"Bah! do not fear him. Wait until our friends are all out. Then listen to what I have to tell them of Diego Alva."

Stooping down so as to have his head below the opening in the platform, Galvez again sounded his whistle.

Soon after the ends of a ladder appeared from the dark recesses of the well. Then quickly appeared Stomio; and after him all the others except Silva and Estella; Lady Hilda and the duke coming last.

"Now," said the duke, when all were together in the court-yard at the brink of the well, "it will be best to let Silva and Estella remain where they are, for though this alarm is over we may be visited again. Come, Galvez, while we stretch our limbs upon this green grass, tell us all that has happened while we were imprisoned below. Did those whom you heard come?"

"It is delightful to breathe the fresh air," sighed Lady Hilda, "after the hours we have spent in that stifling wine-vault; so very dark too, and we scarcely daring to breathe. All the time I trembled, fearing Silva or Estella, or both, might free their mouths from the gags, and set our enemies upon us with their screams."

"Oh, we had plenty of air," said the duke, "such as it was. Rather close, musty, and damp. Well, Galvez? We are all impatient to hear!"

Galvez, whose eyes were full of that strange gleaming noticed in the preceding chapter, told all that had happened until he came to the fall of Captain Britto from the tower window.

"Now," said he, "let Torsa speak."

"Oh, I have little to tell," cried Torsa, rubbing his hands. "I found *échance* to make a safe and speedy end of one of our most dangerous pursuers. In fact, to be brief, I tossed Captain Britto from that window there."

"Good Heavens!" cried Torsetta, gazing up at the window. "What's fall? And what became of him?"

"Oh, that is for Galvez to tell, as he had what I had not—the pleasure of seeing him strike the ground."

"I will tell you," said Galvez, with great deliberation. "Ahem! First I chanced to be looking up. Secondly, I saw him leap, as it were, headlong from the window. Thirdly, he turned over a great many times in falling. Fourthly, he fell upon a man before he struck the ground."

"Oh!" exclaimed Torsa, with his deep-set eyes shining like stars, "this is new to me. The man he struck must have been killed!"

"Fifthly," continued Galvez, with more slowness than ever, "he then struck the ground, and died within three minutes. Sixthly, his soldiers carried the body away in their barge, and are now miles off, on the Tagus. Seventhly, the man upon whom Britto fell was not killed, but so badly hurt that he was left behind by the soldiers, for me to take care of. Eighthly, that man is in the room in which Torsa and Torsetta sleep, when they are not amusing themselves with that Silva. And lastly," yelled old Galvez, in a paroxysm of triumph, "that man who was left behind is Diego Alva! Ha! ha! Diego Alva! Do you hear, Torsa? And you, my lord? He is in there, on his back, like a broken-backed serpent, writhing and hissing, under our heels. Ha! ha! Diego Alva! Look at Torsa. How he runs! And Torsetta. She runs like a deer too. Ho, for Don Diego Alva!"

The whole party now arose, and hurried after Torsa and Torsetta, who were running a furious race to see which should be the first at the side of Diego Alva; that is, at the side of the man who could tell them where to find their child, their boy, their Pepino.

Diego Alva had recovered from his swoon very soon after the soldiers had left the monastery. He recovered to find himself on a coarse bed, with Ultima sitting near him.

He spoke to her, but she replied briefly: "Your companions have gone."

"Gone! And left me here!"

"They dared not move you to the city. They were afraid you might die."

"Die! I am not much hurt. I will get up. Oh!"

He made a very desperate effort to rise, and sank back, groaning.

"Oh, I cannot move my legs! My spine must be fearfully hurt. Oh! But they are soon coming back with a surgeon."

"Patience."

"You are foolish to speak to me of patience!"

screeched Alva. "Where is Galvez? Has he hurried to the city to tell Count Pedro? to get a surgeon?"

This and much more screamed the crippled wretch, to all of which Ultima listened with a dark face, saying only, at intervals:

"Patience!"

Diego Alva, unable to move his legs, howled, raved, cursed, begged, beat the air, the bed, the pillow, with his fists, until he had only breath enough left to moan.

To all of which old Ultima replied, at intervals:

"Patience!"

And in the midst of this uproar came Torsa, and clinging to his skirts was Torsetta.

"Ha! ha! it is! it is! it is!" roared Torsa, as his eyes fell upon the pale, green-eyed face on the bed.

"Hi! hi! it is! it is!" screamed Torsetta, and then she and Torsa joined hands, and began a hideous kind of dance around the bed, to the utter terror, horror and dismay of Don Diego Alva, who yelled:

"Devils! I am among devils! Ugh! Torsa and Torsetta! Mercy! Help! Fire! Murder! Guards! Count Pedro! Hero! they will torture me!"

And in the midst of this Babel of sound and dance—for old Ultima, electrified by the delight of Torsa and Torsetta, added her screech and dance to theirs—in came the duke and the others.

"Oh!" screamed Diego Alva, staring wildly. And then there was a silence.

Torsa and Torsetta crouched down on their hands, their eyes fixed on Alva: red, angry, ferocious, ravenous, like the eyes of two wild beasts, half-tamed only at times, awaiting meat, which they set and know they are to devour presently.

"Who am I, Diego Alva?" suddenly demanded the duke.

"Stephano Villota! Great Heaven! Mercy!" gasped Alva, staring.

"And this is my brother, Fernando Villota," said the duke, laying his right hand on the shoulder of Ultima.

"And I am Carlos Romago!"

"And I am Sañer de Reus!"

"And I am Pietro Gallani!"

Each one as he spoke advanced a step, glaring hate and vengeance at the man on the bed.

"And I am Torsa!" roared that person. "And this is Torsetta! And we have Silva, who stole our babe."

"Mercy from me, Diego Alva, you cannot expect," said the duke, coldly. "Yet my hand shall not be raised against you. Give him paper, pen and ink. He can use his hands yet. Patience, Torsa. Hold him up in bed, Torsa—you and Torsetta. Place that broad dish on his knees, the paper on the dish. Take the pen, Alva. Write as I dictate thus:

"MY LORD AND FRIEND—I have them all the

two Villotas, Lady Hilda, and the three servants of the old duke. Come with the bearer of this note,

and alone. Fear nothing, though your lordship

must come by night and on the Tagus. Those who

hold them prisoners threaten to release them, unless

your lordship comes in person."

"Yours faithfully, DINGO ALVA.
"To the noble Count d'Ulloa."
"Has he written it Torsa?"
"Yes, my lord."
"And signed it?"
"Yes, my lord."

"Give the paper to me. Ah, very well done, and with a free and easy hand. It will pass," said the duke, folding the letter.

"Now, Torsa and Torsetta, my followers will aid

you to place Diego Alva and Lorenzo Ritzburg face

to face in the wine vault."

Torsa leaped with delight.

"Oh, am I to be given up to that demon!" exclaimed Alva, shuddering and staring at Torsa.

"Must my strange dreams prove true at last?"

"Strange dreams!" repeated the duke. "Of what do you speak, Diego Alva?"

"I have never seen him that I did not shudder," replied Alva, and pointed with both hands at Torsa.

"I have always dreamed I was to fall into his hands

—to be tortured by him! Horrible!"

"Your dreams were prophecies, Diego Alva."

"Oh, Heaven! Mercy! Give me instant death, my lord! Give me a sword, a knife, a dagger—anything, that I may make an end of my life!"

"You possess a secret which belongs to Torsetta."

"A secret that belongs to Torsetta! Impossible!"

"What secret of hers have I?"

"You forget the strangled babe in the torture

chamber of the holy Office."

"I had nothing to do with that," cried Alva.

"The whole affair was managed by Ritzburg. He

stole the child. I did not tell him to do it. I did not wish him to do it. Count Pedro ordered the babe

to be strangled."

"Vindictive man!" said the duke. "It may be

true that you did not command Ritzburg to steal the child of Torsetta, nor to strangle it; but you know that the child lived."

On hearing this, Alva uttered a cry of amazement.

"You know that the child lives now, and where he is; yet, from mere baseness of heart you will not reveal the truth, lest it may gladden the souls of these two unhappy parents. But they will torture the secret from you."

"My lord," said Alva, while his greenish eyes blazed with a treacherous light. "I know nothing of the child of Torsa and Torsetta."

"Ho! I shall soon see about that," said Torsa, fiercely. "I know how to make men confess. I am Torsa! You tremble; you shudder. Come, you shall not die so suddenly as the fellow I tossed from the tower. A lucky toss, since it put you in my power."

"Wait! Did you throw Captain Joan Britto from the tower?" cried Alva, the treacherous glare in his vengeful, cunning eyes burning brighter.

"Aye, and down he went, to cripple you."

"My lord," said Alva to the duke, "if I reveal to this man the name of his son, and where he is, will your grace protect me from his torturing?"

"Come," said Torsetta, advancing quickly. "My husband has no desire to torture you, if you will tell us where we may find our son. Is it not so, Torsa?"

"Yes. Tell us where we may find our little Pepino—he, he must be a stout man now!—tell us where we may find him, and we will swear not to harm a hair of your head, Diego Alva."

"There is no hope for me," observed Alva, with a furious, vengeful visage, and glaring hate upon all around. "I know I must die. I believe my backbone is broken. I have no feeling in my legs."

"I will not disguise from you the fact that you are hurt beyond all cure," said old Carlos, who had examined the wounded man. "Your spine is injured. You must die. There is no hope for you. But you may live as you are for days; may, life may be kept in you for weeks. You have no feeling in your legs, and they cannot be tortured. But the rest of your body can feel."

"I know it—I know it!" yelled Alva, fierce in his protestation. "And Torsa shall not torture me, if I tell him where to find his son?"

"I swear it!" said Torsa.

"And I!" cried Torsetta.

"And do you, Stephano Villota," asked Alva, "also swear that I shall be protected by you, so that I may die in peace; if I reveal the name of Torsa's son, and where Torsa may find him?"

"I pledge my word, and it shall be kept as you keep yours," replied the duke.

"Torsa," said Alva, with a grim, vindictive smile, "hurry to the quarters of the royal palace guards. You will find your Pepino there."

"His name?" asked Torsa and Torsetta eagerly.

"Joan Britto!" shrieked Alva, mad with rage, pain and malice. "Captain Joan Britto! Ha! the man you tossed from the tower! the man with whom you crippled and crushed me, Torsa; the man you killed was your stolen babe—your Pepino; I swear it!"

Torsa heard with a shuddering frame, and mouth all agape.

He stretched out his hands and gazed at them. He quivered in a paroxysm of mental agony, and said in a hollow voice:

"With my own hands I have slain my son!"

Then falling upon the door he beat his brow against the stones, like a fierce beast that has received a fatal, maddening hurt.

But Torsetta stared at the mocking face of Diego Alva in voiceless horror for a moment, and then, with a bitter moaning, sank down in a heap, tearing her long grizzly hair.

"He lies!" said the deep voice of the duke, whose calm, powerful eyes had keenly studied Alva's face. "Joan Britto was of the army. The son of Torsa is in the navy."

"And how know you that?" asked Alva, whose mocking smile instantly changed to a grin of terror.

"You shall learn from the confector called Silva," replied the duke, coldly, "with whom Torsa shall confront you. Silva will tell how he found a leaf that fell from your memorandum book. Here, my men. Aid Torsa to lower this vindictive villain to the wine vault. Torsa, he is yours. He has lied. The lie is in his face. He must live to meet his master, Count Pedro. See that he does not die too soon."

"Leave the length of his days to me, my lord," replied Torsa, with a voice trembling with rage.

"I will speak the truth—the truth—nothing but the truth!" shrieked Alva, who saw that his last thrust at those he hated had failed. "Mercy!"

"Stop his cries!" said the duke.

And in another instant Diego Alva, gagged, could speak only with his eyes.

His eyes, green and glaring, with ghastly horror were fearfully eloquent.

"You and the enemies of my house," said the duke coldly, "used to call Stephano Villota 'The Terrible.' Now you know him to be so. Bear him to the wine-vaults."

We will not remain with Diego Alva in the wine vaults. We will only state, for the present, that he was conveyed thither by the duke's Italiots; that they left him there, and laid him upon the ground at the feet of Silva, who, bound and gagged as he had been for days, was still in the great iron chair—a most dreaded object to see, but alive, in a kind of living death.

(To be continued.)

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

THE annual meeting of this society was held on the 23rd ult., in the theatre of the Royal Institution. There was an unusually large attendance of ladies and gentlemen, owing perhaps to the presence of an illustrious visitor, His Majesty the King of the Belgians, who entered the theatre at 1 o'clock, accompanied by Sir Roderick I. Murchison, the President of the Society, and the members of the Council.

The President, who on rising was warmly received, said he would, before beginning the business of the meeting, take this opportunity of expressing the gratification he felt in being honoured with the presence of His Majesty the King of the Belgians. (Cheers.) Some time ago they had elected His Majesty a Foreign Associate, and since his election he had continued to evince the deepest interest in the proceedings of the society. Under his auspices, too, a Geographical Society was now being established in Belgium. The President, then taking the King's hand, expressed on behalf of the Geographical Society the great pleasure they felt in making His Majesty a Foreign Associate.

His Majesty the King of the Belgians graciously thanked the society for the honour they had done him in electing him one of their members. Although he felt he had not done anything to deserve the honour bestowed on him, yet he had always read with great pleasure the results of the expeditions made under their auspices, and he should continue to follow the proceedings of the society with great interest.

The President then read the following gratifying despatch which he had received from Lord Clarendon in answer to an appeal for further assistance to Dr. Livingstone:—

"Foreign Office, May 19, 1870.

"Sir,—I have lost no time in submitting to my colleagues your observations upon the position in which Dr. Livingstone is placed in consequence of his want of money, and her Majesty's Government have not failed to consider all you have urged in favour of a further grant to the distinguished traveller—namely, that he has been struggling without aid or communication with England for the last three years; that by the last accounts he had reached a point from which he can neither advance nor retreat without supplies, and that the money granted to him at his departure being exhausted, further funds are urgently required to provide a fresh equipment and the means of conveying it into the interior.

"I have now great pleasure in informing you that her Majesty's Government are prepared to authorise a grant of £1,000, on account of Dr. Livingstone's expedition, in the earnest hope that this sum may be the means of promoting his return in safety to this country.

"I am, &c., CLARENDON.

To Sir Roderick I. Murchison.

The President then presented the Founder's medal, which was awarded to Mr. G. J. W. Hayward, the society's envoy to Central Asia, for the map of his journey across the Kuen Lun into Eastern Turkistan, and for the perseverance with which he is endeavouring to carry out his object of reaching the Pamir Steppe. In presenting the medals offered by the society to be competed for by pupils in public schools, the President remarked with regret that the great schools of Eaton, Harrow, and Rugby had not entered into the competition. In political geography the gold medal was won by G. W. Gent, of Rossall School; the bronze medal by J. H. Collins, of Liverpool College; for physical geography the gold medal was awarded to G. G. Butler, of Liverpool College; the bronze medal to M. Stewart, of Rossall School. The Society of Arts prize of £1. was awarded to Thomas Richard Clarke.

The President, in delivering his annual address on the progress of geographical discovery during the past year, said the chief advances in geographical knowledge had been made in Central Asia, and especially in those parts of the great mountain backbone of the "Old World" which lie to the

north-west of our Indian empire in the vast territory recently opened up to us, and designated "Eastern" in contradistinction to "Western," or what really is at present "Russian Turkistan." At the last anniversary he could only speak of Mr. Shaw as having successfully penetrated Yarkand to Kashgar with his cargo of tea from Kangra, and of his having been well received by the great Chief Yakoob Kushbegi, who had since been recognized as the "Leader of the Faithful." Mr. Shaw in a few months had established friendly relations with that powerful ruler, who had sent a special envoy into British India with letters for the Queen and the Viceroy of India. Lord Mayo, in a letter to Sir Roderick Murchison, had expressed his gratification at the prospect of establishing friendly intercourse with this new nation as leading to an interchange of the products of Eastern Turkistan with those of the British Empire. Mr. Hayward had demonstrated the true course of the Yarkand river as well as that of the Karakash, and had obtained information of a better pass (the Yangi) over the Kuen Lun than the one at present used by traders. He was still endeavouring to penetrate to the Pamir Land, and had expressed a hope that if he should be unable to repass the hostile tribes lying between that land and British India, he might be permitted to return through Russian Turkistan. In compliance with the request of the society the Imperial Government at St. Petersburg had ordered the Governor-General of Turkistan to afford Mr. Hayward all aid and assistance as well as a free passage through those territories to Europe. The result of the mission to St. Petersburg lately undertaken by their Associate, Mr. Douglass Forsyth, was very satisfactory, for the Emperor and Prince Gortachakoff were willing to maintain the present Russian boundary of the Thian Chan mountains, and to undertake not to advance the Russian forces into Eastern Turkistan. This large territory might, therefore, now be considered a neutral region, which would prove a source of lucrative traffic both for Russia and England. While our countrymen had been largely adding to our acquaintance with Eastern Turkistan the Russians had extended geographical knowledge throughout Western Turkistan, a large portion of which they had all but annexed. The day had now arrived when the Imperial Government on the west, and the British Government on the east, were rivals in thoroughly exploring and determining their respective frontiers, leaving between each dominion wild tracts which would probably be for ever independent, but whose chiefs would well know how to respect their powerful neighbours.

These geographical operations were also the forerunners to the establishment of good commercial intercourse, and were also, he ventured to think, the surer pledges of peace. Throughout the past year they had been kept in a state of anxious suspense respecting the position of the great traveller Livingstone, and he grieved to close his address without being able to offer some encouraging sentences on the prospect of speedily welcoming him home. At the same time there was no cause for despondency as to his life and safety. It was known that he had been for some time at Ujiji, on the Lake Tanganyika, whence he wrote home on the 30th of May last, although unable to make any movement for want of carriers and supplies. These had indeed been forwarded to him by Dr. Kirk, from Zanzibar, but, unfortunately, an outbreak of cholera stopped and paralysed the relieving party. Recent intelligence, however, had reached the Foreign Office to the effect that the pestilence had subsided to so great an extent that it might be presumed the communication between the coast and Ujiji had before now been re-opened. It was hoped that Livingstone would live to advance to the north end of the Tanganyika, and there ascertain if its waters flow into the Albert Nyanza of Baker. If the junction should be proved, Livingstone, who must now be informed of the actual carrying out of the great project of Sir Samuel Baker, might endeavour to meet his great contemporary. The progress of the great Egyptian Expedition of Baker having been delayed in its outset, only left Khartoum to ascend the White Nile in February. After reaching Gondokoro, probably in the first days of March, some time must elapse in establishing a factory above the Upper Rapids, and beyond the tributary Asna, where the steam vessels were to be put together before they were launched on the Nile water, on which they were to pass to the great Lake Albert Nyanza. As soon as the steamer was on that lake, Baker, with his well-known energy and promptitude, would not lose a moment in endeavouring to reach its southern end, in the expectation of there giving hand and help to Livingstone. The President concluded his address amid loud cheers, by expressing a hope that before their next annual meeting the great traveller Livingstone would have determined the grand problem of the ultimate sources of both the Nile and the Congo.

Lisette Grimo worked her hands and flashed her eyes. It did not seem to her that much chance was left for her to make a grand bargain. It appeared that her evidence was to be as nothing.

Antoine stood aloof, grave and silent, as was his habit.

Admiral Sir George Back moved, and Sir Charles Nicholson seconded, a vote of thanks to the President, and the proceedings terminated.

THE LOCKSMITH OF LYONS.

CHAPTER XXI.

Well, if the thing stand thus,
As you must die—one would not bear folk hard,
And if the rest do hold it honourable,
Why, I do pardon you.

Lisette Grimo was filled with rage on discovering that already so much was being proved of the origin of Blanche. Lisette Grimo was there, in truth, for no other purpose than to reveal all she knew, and to prove all she could; but it enraged her to find that her secret had been so thoroughly undermined by chance and the suspicions of the doctor.

While Lisette Grimo muttered her useless and incoherent curses, the general examined the shoe given to him by the artisan.

"Undoubtedly this is the other shoe worn by my child when she was abducted by Barbe Rousseau!" exclaimed La Mothier.

"What if it is? what if it is?" cried Lisette Grimo. "It proves nothing, does it? Come, why waste time? Let us take it for granted that the shoe is the mate of the other—that they were both on the foot of Leoleta La Mothier when she was thrown into the Seine; that the body of the child was for a time in my hands—oh! What can you prove? Can any one but Lisette Malus—me—prove that Blanche is Leoleta? You may put this and that together, and imagine which, and what, and the other—but after all—"

"Silence!" cried the doctor. "Your bargain is not spoiled."

"Oh—perhaps!"

"I am but explaining to the general why I was led to believe Blanche to be his lost child."

"It seems to me," said the artisan, with flashing eyes, "that this old woman is very insolent for an outlaw and a criminal."

"Good!" screamed Lisette Grimo, venomously, beating the table with her bony fists and the carpet with her heels, in a paroxysm of rage and malice. "I am an outlaw and a criminal, my fine fellow; but ha! ha! was I ever branded? Ho! Blanche, your gay lover there is a *galerien*! Don't think, if you may be the daughter of Henri La Mothier, that your proud father will let you have a branded jail-bird for a husband. Oh, I am not afraid to talk as I please here. The doctor has pledged his word that I shall be as free as I was to come."

"Peace," said the general, with great haughtiness, "or I may be satisfied to receive the young lady as my daughter without hearing you. Go on doctor."

The latter resumed:

"Monsieur George Herbert, in whom I feel a deep interest, showed me the little shoe Blanche gave him, and I at once suspected that it was the mate of that which I had seen on the body of the child in the Morgue at Paris. After that I saw Blanche herself, without her knowledge. Her extraordinary resemblance to Leoleta de Vale convinced me that she was Leoleta, especially as Blanche also greatly resembles you, General La Mothier. After that, I saw this old woman, who calls herself Lisette Grimo. I at once recognised her as Lisette Malus, the sister of Barbe Rousseau. You now perceive, general, why I suspected Blanche to be your child."

"Now, woman," said the general, sternly, "I am ready to hear your statement."

"Oh, and what if I have none to make?"

"Then you can depart."

"Stars of light!" cried Lisette Grimo, amazed at the scornful sternness of the noble. "Don't you think that what I may be able to prove is worth something?"

"You may say or not say, as you please," replied the general, rising and advancing towards Blanche. "In the face and form of this young lady I see repeated exactly the face and form of my dear wife, as she was when I made her my bride; and my heart sprang to embrace her as my child the instant my eyes fell upon her; after what Dr. Planche has stated I have no doubt—Blanche, my Leoleta, I accept, I acknowledge, I embrace you as my dear child."

Blanche threw herself into the arms of the general, and wept upon his bosom, while he pressed his lips to her cheek and brow, whispering:

"Dear child! dear one; what happiness is in store for your mother!—that fond and long-bereaved mother you have never seen!"

Lisette Grimo worked her hands and flashed her eyes. It did not seem to her that much chance was left for her to make a grand bargain. It appeared that her evidence was to be as nothing.

Antoine stood aloof, grave and silent, as was his habit.

The artisan gazed upon the general and Blanche with eyes full of noble expression.

"Ho!" cried Lisette Grimo, catching the beaming eyes of the artisan, "you should be green and yellow with chagrin. She is lost to you. I have great joy in that little fact."

The general heard and understood her. With a firm, frank voice, he said as he led Blanche to the artisan:

"In acknowledging Blanche as my child, I do not rob you, noble young man, of your right to love her, to be loved by her, nor of your hope to make her your wife."

"Oh, general!" cried the artisan, as Blanche glided to his open arms.

"Had I not seen and heard that which proved your spotless honour, and nobility of character?" continued Le Mothier, "it is not probable that I should have so readily accepted you as a favoured suitor for the hand of my daughter. No narrative, no matter how urged, nor by whom, could have placed before me your true character and worth, as has been done by what has passed in this room."

"Oh!" thought the old doctor, "it was well that I planned things as I did. Le Mothier is as proud as Lucifer, but he has the heart and warm impulses of a good and sensible man. Ha! Lisette," he added, aloud, "You see, you have not even the contemptible satisfaction of depriving two young and devoted hearts of the pleasure of being united for ever."

"Still," cried the old woman, "I think that which I am able to say may be worth something. At least, I shall not say it, unless I be well rewarded."

"Woman," said the general, "years ago your band of thieves, 'The Snake-Charmers,' robbed me of certain documents, papers, deeds, and titles of real estate, the loss of which has been for years a source of great vexation to me. A few weeks ago, when I first came to Lyons, I saw you and recognised you in the street. You did not see me."

"No; I wish I had," muttered Lisette.

"Believing that you might have those papers in your possession, or that among your effects some trace of them might be found, I employed an agent to secretly examine your trunks, or whatever you might keep your valuables in. This agent told me that you had a chest which you especially valued, and that it would be impossible to examine that chest without first obtaining a key to the lock of your bedroom door—that the key of the lock, which was of strange construction, was carried by a young girl whom you claimed as your niece. I did not believe that you had any niece, though that was possible. I had never seen the girl you said was your niece, nor cared to see her, for, as I have said, I had no suspicion that my child was alive. I ordered my agent, Coulot Andre, to obtain an impression of the key carried by the girl, and he contrived to do so. With that impress I visited the shop of this young man, who is now aware of my only purpose in desiring a key like that which was carried by his betrothed. As regards anything you may have to say for or against the belief I have that Blanche De Moulaine is my daughter, I care nothing. I accept as a fact, the belief that she is Loolette La Mothier. You and I may bargain for the stolen title-deeds."

"Ho! you are not so easy as you would make out, Henri La Mothier," cried the old woman, indignantly.

"Do not be insolent to me. It is true that Dr. Planche has promised you shall be as free to leave his house as you were to come in, and I shall not attempt to step between you and his word," said La Mothier, firmly. "But I shall accompany you to the street, and there I shall arrest you."

There was so much fire in the eyes of the general that the old woman at once subdued her tone and manner.

"Why do you intend to arrest me?" she asked.

"First, that you may be punished for your crimes. Second, that you may be deprived of all power to commit more crimes. Third, that in open court it shall be proved that Blanche is my daughter."

"And this is all the reward that I am to receive for coming here of my own free will? Oh!"

"You have confessed nothing. You have admitted nothing. You have denied everything."

"Then I am to be arrested?"

"You are to be arrested and punished, vile old woman. You have been prompted to come here by some powerful motive of which we know nothing. You probably saw the net of circumstantial proof closing around you, and you hastened to make a virtue of necessity. If you have anything to say, it will be best for you to say it, and trust to my clemency."

"What a fool I was to give up my knife!" thought Lisette Grimo. "At least I could have given this proud La Mothier a scratch! Oh, I was foolish."

"Come," said Dr. Planche, "it is time you were gone. Open the door, Antoine, and let her go."

"Stop; I want my property first."

"Your property?"

"Certainly. My knife."

"Your knife, being poisoned, is an illegal weapon. I shall present it to the superintendent of the police."

"If I state, under oath, before a magistrate, all I know about the girl," whined the now terrified old woman, "will you promise me not to have me arrested? If I do all I can to prove that Blanche is your child, will you promise not to arrest me, and never to molest me for anything that I have done?"

"I will promise that, Lisette Malus," replied the general.

"And all that are here promise the same?" demanded the old woman, with a glance around.

Receiving a satisfactory reply, she continued:

"I came here hoping to be able to win a large reward. I was foolish to trust myself out of La Croix Rousse, but then La Croix Rousse was no safe place for me. I have escaped from there. I have nothing to gain now. My game is all spoiled. Come, let a magistrate be sent for, that all I have to say may be written down and sworn to."

"There is no necessity to send for a magistrate," said Dr. Planche. "I am a magistrate of Lyons, recently appointed by the government."

"Good. I am glad of that," remarked Lisette. "Are you ready to set down what I wish to swear to?"

"Yes, I am ready; say on."

"The girl Blanche is a child of Henri La Mothier, and his wife Loolette de Vale. She is the infant Loolette La Mothier, whom Barbe Rousseau stole from the house of Henri La Mothier on the night of the 14th of December, 1818, in Paris, and who was hurried by Barbe Rousseau into the Seine from Pont Neuf. I rescued her to spite Barbe Rousseau; and that at some future time I might gain a great reward from Henri La Mothier. I procured the body of a female infant of her age, and placed upon that body one of Loolette's shoes. Then I concealed the body in water until its features had become unrecognizable. Then I secretly cast the body into the Seine, where I knew it would be found by the river-police. All resolved as I expected and desired. La Mothier, deceived by the shoe, buried and mourned over the body, believing it to be that of his child. The child has never been out of my sight a week at a time since I rescued her. I gave her the name of Blanche de Moulaine, and she has never been known by any other. When I fled from France, I went with her to Naples. We lived there many years. I had some money and made more, so that we lived respectably. I was careful to rear Blanche piously and virtuously. I don't say that I was ever pious or virtuous, or ever wanted to be. I swear, however, that no mother could have been more careful of the morals and habits of her child than I was of those of Blanche. I don't say I was so for any other reason than this—I knew La Mothier would pay a great reward all the more willing to regain his child as pure and spotless as she was when he lost her. I don't say I deserve any credit for that, either. Perhaps I might say so if I wasn't known so well. At least, there she is, as pure and spotless as any girl in Europe. I don't regret it, either. As far as I was ever able to be attached to anything, I was fond of her. I am sorry I ever beat her. Lay all that to my bad temper. When we left Naples, we came to Lyons. We have been in Lyons several years, living very quietly. I taught Blanche how to weave, and made her work at the loom. I was all the time trying to hear something of La Mothier, but he was beyond my search. Besides, I was afraid to make much stir, fearing recognition. I believed all of 'The Snake-charmers' were dead; and until the day I lost Blanche, I had no suspicion that my brother, Barbe Rousseau, was alive. A short time before, Le Scorpion tried some trick on me. I think he was after a chance to rob my chest. That was the first of my knowledge that he was still alive. Now I will tell you of the robbery of my chest."

Lisette Grimo then related that which is known to the reader, but said nothing of the terrible trick she had played upon Papa Canton. She said, simply: "I managed to escape—it does not matter how, and I came straight here. The clothes and things the child had on when I dragged her from the Seine, and the papers, parchments, &c., I took from Henri La Mothier's house are no longer in my possession. I can't say they ever will be again."

"It would give me great pleasure to recover the clothing," remarked the general, when Lisette Grimo had concluded; "though I do not desire that as a corroboration of the story you have told. But, if possible, the papers must be recovered, or the law-suits in which I am involved with certain claimants for a part of my estates will continue for years a source of vexation and expense. My child being re-

stored to me, pure and spotless, Lisette Malus, I forgive you freely for all the past. Recover those papers, and I will fill your pockets with gold and aid you to leave France, so that you may live in ease, and, perchance, repent and reform."

Lisette Grimo reflected for a time, and then said: "It is a bargain. I know I shall risk my life; but I must have something to defend myself with. I have two malicious fiends to deceive. I must have my knife. It is the only weapon they fear."

"You shall have your knife," said the doctor. "I will give it to you in the street."

"You dare not trust me with it, my brave doctor?" sneered the old woman, rising and drawing her shawl about her.

"No," replied the doctor, promptly. "You are a spiteful and venomous old witch. Having this dreadful weapon in your hand you might be tempted to try to use it on some of us, and then some of us would be forced to put a ball through your head."

Here the doctor took a pistol from a drawer, cocked it, and gave it to Antoine. He then armed himself in like manner, and said:

"There is a volcano of baffled avarice and hate raging in your heart, Lisette Malus. You are desperate enough to throw away your own viles and forfeited life, in an attempt to take one of ours. That revengeful desire glares in your eyes."

Such desire did, indeed, sparkle from every feature of the old woman. With that venomous knife in her hand, within that room, she felt assured that she could stab or slash, or, at least, scratch more than one ere she could be shot down.

The prudence of the doctor baffled her. She had come to shear, and was going away shorn, as yet undecided whether to again make common cause with Barbe Rousseau and Le Scorpion, or to make an attempt to win the reward promised by La Mothier for the recovery of the lost parchments

CHAPTER XXX.

Must a dead man not be looked upon?
That living one was feared of? Give me way!
Chastelard.

"OPEN the door, Antoine, and let her pass out," said the doctor. "When you are in the street, Lisette Malus, I will toss you your vile weapon."

Followed by Antoine and the doctor, Lisette Grimo passed from the office after a scowl and grimace at all within it, and was soon standing upon the pavement before the house, looking up at the doctor, as he paused on the steps.

"There, take your accursed knife!" he said, as he tossed it towards her.

It was in its sheath, and the quick clutch of the old woman caught it, as it flew through the air. She hid it under her shawl, and hurried away.

"I do not know that we have done well in permitting her to escape so easily," thought the doctor, as he gazed after her. "She is a venomous old woman, and may give us trouble hereafter."

He returned to his friends in the office; and we will follow Lisette Grimo.

She hurried towards La Croix Rousse with the same haste and directness that had marked her steps when leaving that quarter.

"I must risk it," she thought, as she hurried on from street to street. "I do not think Canton lied when he said they were to be gone all day. Perhaps I had best make the most of bad luck, and try to get those papers. I don't want to lose my chest, either—all my clothes and things. There's more to be made out of La Mothier than out of an alliance with Barbe Rousseau and Le Scorpion. It's hard to be thwarted so badly, after all my plannings and waiting of fifteen years, but there is no help for it now. The girl is lost to me, and all chance of ever making a grand fortune out of her. I think I had better try to recover the papers. To even attempt that, I must feign to be friends with those two villains. They've got all my money, too—all my dear savings—oh! nearly a hundred thousand francs!"

This reflection nearly drove Lisette Grimo wild.

"I have a great mind to lie in wait for them in that room, and make an end of them as they come in. But then Le Scorpion is fearfully quick with his knife, and it is just as dangerous as mine. Then there are two of them."

Perplexed and undecided still, the old woman at length arrived at the door of the room in which she had left Papa Canton.

She peeped in. Papa Canton was there yet, swinging by his dead hand to the rope ladder.

"Good!" muttered Lisette Grimo. "It is plain that no one has been in since I left."

Again she went out. While out, she purchased a stout cord, with which she returned. She climbed up the rope ladder to the room above, made fast one end of the cord to her chest, dragged the chest to the edge of the trap-door, and, after passing the cord around one end of the bed-post, lowered the chest

to the floor below. This being done, she descended, untied the cord, and dragged the chest out into the hall. Leaving the chest there, she again went into the street, procured the services of a porter, and had her chest carried away.

It was after dark when Barbe Rousseau and Le Scorpion returned to the room. They entered together, rudely, as was their custom.

"Heh!" cried Barbe Rousseau, halting after a single step into the room, and unable, in the total darkness, to see anything. "No light! Ho, Papa Canton! Why have you no light? Come, strike a light—quickly—for we have a basket of the best red wine for you."

There was no reply. A dead stillness followed the words of Barbe Rousseau.

"A light, old sot!" screeched Le Scorpion, impatiently. "Do you hear? A light!"

There was no reply, and Barbe Rousseau called out:

"Come, have you stolen out?"

"No doubt he is tipsy, or has got tired of waiting for us, and stolen out for a sly drink. Here, I have a box of matches in my pocket—I will myself strike a light."

The matches of 1870 were not like the matches of 1870. They were slow and very uncertain burners, and before Le Scorpion had succeeded in igniting a match sufficiently well to permit him to step out in search of the lamp always standing on the table, Barbe Rousseau, who was groping about, stumbled over something, and fell headlong.

He was too active to have been tripped had he not been encumbered with a basket, filled with bottles of wine, and provisions, and unexpectedly encountered the body of Papa Canton, for it was that over which he had stumbled.

"Ah!" cried Le Scorpion, letting fall his match; "you startled me. Ho! that was a bad fall—especially for the bottles. Wait—I will light another match."

"Fest!" roared Barbe Rousseau, in a rage, and by the touch recognizing the presence of Papa Canton. "It is true. Here he lies. A pummeling in the ribs will do you no harm."

Whereupon, believing that the prostrate old sot was simply tipsy, and wishing to arouse him roughly, Barbe Rousseau began to thump and beat that which he could not see, laying out with fearful violence, and exclaiming:

"Wake up, wake up, old soaker and sloth that you are! How dare you fall asleep in our absence? I'll break your ribs!"

"Curse these matches!" cried Le Scorpion. "They are wet; they will not burn long enough to catch the splinter."

"Ho!" roared Barbe Rousseau, who had made a discovery while hammering at the dead man.

Something in his tone warned Le Scorpion, who was still making ineffectual attempts to ignite his wet matches, that something had gone wrong. He paused, and yelled out, impatiently:

"Well, what is the matter?"

"This man is dead!"

"Bah!"

"True! I say Papa Canton is dead."

"Oh, a fit, perhaps!"

"No; cold, and his arms are raised up. They are—oh, torture! A trick—a trap! Great Heaven! A light—quick! A trick of Lisette! Fury! I am fast by both hands!"

True! Barbe Rousseau, in groping about with his angry hands, had grasped with one the scarf, and instinctively clutched the scarf with the other to free that which was secured by the keen, barbed hooks.

Lisette Grimo had, without intending it, caught another fish—a bigger fish than Papa Canton—in fact, so to say, whale!

Le Scorpion, bewildered by the fierce cries of pain and rage of his comrade, and unable to see what was the cause, at length succeeded in lighting the lamp.

As its rays filled the room, Le Scorpion beheld the rope-ladder hanging down from the trap-door above; the dead body of Papa Canton, with its dead hands clutching the fatal scarf; and Barbe Rousseau on his knees, which rested on the body of Papa Canton, and his hands fastened to the same scarf, a few inches above those of the dead man.

"Quick! the sabre there in the corner!" cried Barbe Rousseau, whose features, always hideous, were now positively diabolical in their expression of horror, terror, and rage.

"Ho! the trick of the scarf and fish-hooks!" exclaimed Le Scorpion. "She played that to the police-detective in Paris, years ago. Ha! so she has escaped!"

"The sabre—the sabre!" roared Barbe Rousseau. "It is in the corner there. Quick! No doubt the hooks are poisoned! Quick!—smite off my hands at the wrists!—there is no other way to save my life!"

"Oh, the hooks are poisoned—no doubt of that," said Le Scorpion, as he glanced at the face and hands of dead Papa Canton. "You bid me smite off your hands?"

He had drawn the keen and glittering sabre from its sheath, and was standing near the entrapped wretch.

"There is no antidote, is there?" groaned Barbe Rousseau.

"I do not know what venom Lisette has used," replied Le Scorpion. "If that of the coral snake of the Brazils, there is no antidote—especially as you must have a dozen hooks in your hands."

"A dozen! a thousand at least!" cried Barbe Rousseau. "My hands are pierced everywhere! Smite off with them! better be handless than lifeless! Quick—or the cursed venom will get into my blood! Smite!"

The one eye of Le Scorpion glared with a kind of fury, mingled with terror. He had ever held this man in awe and a species of respect. He had ever hated, too, while he feared him. He raised the sabre and was about to strike, when Barbe Rousseau cried out:

"Halt! first tie a cord tight around each arm—above the elbow—or I may bleed to death before I can find a surgeon. Haste—there is stout twine on the floor at your feet, use it; rip up my sleeves, so that you may bind the flesh, and veins, and arteries and was about to strike, when Barbe Rousseau cried out:

"Strike!"

Le Scorpion struck twice. At each blow he smote off a hand—a hand of Barbe Rousseau—a hand that had committed a thousand crimes, a thousand infamous deeds—two crime-stained hands, ever eagerly grasping to do evil, to plunder, to destroy, to rob, to murder.

At the first blow Barbe Rousseau made no sound. At the second he howled a curse, fearful, intense, like the howl of a beast shot down suddenly, and sprang to his feet, holding his bleeding stumps before him.

He darted towards the door, shouting:

"A surgeon! a surgeon! in the name of life a surgeon. Come—aid me!"

He was out of the room in a second, and rushing down the great stairway—alone; for Le Scorpion did not go with him, nor leave the room.

On the contrary, Le Scorpion tossed the sabre aside, laughing horribly, as if he had performed a very pleasing feat, and saying, with a leer from his single eye at the two dismembered hands:

"To think that, after all, I should have lived to cut off those hands! Ho! he sneered at my one eye this morning—this very day! How queer! and now he has no hands. I'd rather lose an eye than two hands—ho! as for that, I'd rather lose two eyes than both hands. Perhaps the loss of his hands may save his life—only a perhaps, for that poison is deadly quick. Yet there is a little or no flesh on those bony hands—all bone, sinew and cord, and hard skin—bah! there was no need to cut his hands off; for there was scarcely flesh enough on them to absorb the poison rapidly. Very different from your fat hands, old Papa Canton. So Lisette has escaped. She has managed it very well. How did she get that rope? Before old Canton in some way, no doubt. It was well for her that she did. Papa Canton intended to kill her. I was in hopes he would. But for Barbe Rousseau I would have killed the old woman myself. Queer! If he had not insisted on sparing her life he would now have his hands. It is always folly to be merciful. I wonder where she is? Oh, there seems to be a note on the table—so there is—and from Lisette too:

"I am out, bag and baggage, with a vengeance too," added Le Scorpion, as he read a scrawl Lisette Grimo had left when she departed.

"If you want to see me, inquire for me at the Golden Loom. If you don't come to fair terms with me, and give me back that of which you have robbed me, I will report all I know to General Henri La Mothier."

"Ho!" thought Le Scorpion, when he had read so far; "so she has not made haste to make a bargain for herself with La Mothier! What a simplot! Now, had I been in her place, I should have lost no time in making terms with La Mothier. What a silly old woman—if we don't give her back what we have stolen, she will go to General La Mothier! Why, the old fool is far from being sharp—but as we grow old we lose our shrewdness—and Lisette has been growing old several years. Come, that fish-hook trick shows she has not lost all her wits. But perhaps we wronged her. Perhaps she did not intend to play for herself alone. But what more does she say?"

There was very little more left in the scrawl—only this:

"If you think I am not in earnest, kiss Papa Canton's hands for me. I will wait only a few hours."

"Yours, LISSETTE."

"No doubt you are in earnest," muttered Le Scorpion, with a grimace and a shudder. "What if I, and not Barbe Rousseau, had stumbled over the dead sot. I should never have had the nerve to say, 'Here, smite off my hands.' What would life be to me without my hands. Come, I will go see Lisette at the Golden Loom. But first, let me remove all proofs of how the death of Papa Canton came about."

With this purpose he turned his attention to the removal of the rope-ladder.

(To be continued.)

THEY are having such cold weather in Russia that several sentinels have been frozen to death. We have our own opinion of a man who will stand at his post of duty until he becomes a military incisor, rather than go warm himself and die comfortably under the lash. It is a sort of cheap heroism that should be severely frowned down.

The subject of vertical fire has lately attracted a good deal of attention in England, it may, perhaps, be interesting to learn that the Prussian experiments with rifled mortars have proved so successful, and the precision attained is so great as to induce the Government to adopt these weapons for harbour defence. This new mortar has an 8-in. calibre; is, therefore, a nominal 72-pounder, but throws an elongated shell weighing about 200lb. But this is according to Prussian weights and measures; translated into English, it becomes an 8½-in. calibre, a nominal 76-pounder, throwing a shell weighing about 220lb. The tube, which is of bronze, is 6½ feet long, rests on a moveable carriage of a peculiar construction; differing, moreover, from the old-fashioned mortar-beds, inasmuch as it is provided with apparatus for laying the gun at any elevation up to 75 deg. As the resistance of the air prevents the flight of a projectile from preserving a true parabola, and brings a shell down at a much greater angle than that at which it rises, an elevation of 75 deg. implies descent at 80 deg. at least, or perhaps more, so that such a shell would strike a vessel very nearly at right angles; but then the range would, of course, be very limited. The number of the grooves in this Prussian mortar is 30, and the angle of their twist is 7 deg. The breach is closed by double wedge-pieces.

THE manufacture of alcohol from reindeer moss, which was set on foot in 1867 by M. Sternberg, Professor of Chemistry at Stockholm, has been carried on to some extent in Sweden, and is about to be introduced into Norway. At present, large quantities of grain and potatoes are consumed in the manufacture of spirits. It is to be hoped that the production of alcohol from less valuable material will tend to ameliorate the condition of Scandinavia, by setting at liberty the large amount of food-stuffs at present destroyed by distillation.

A PICKED-UP LOVE LETTER.—The following letter was picked up the other day in a leading thoroughfare in Nottingham. "My own darling Lizzie—Your communication was to hand yesterday morning. It was with tearful eye and aching heart that I read, line by line, its unwelcome contents. Whatever has induced you to write as you have done, I am thoroughly bewildered in attempting to discover. When I was last in your company you seemed more beautiful and affectionate than I remember you ever to have seemed before. The words you then spoke seemed to fall like stray music from the harps of celestials on my ravished ears. The pressure of the hand and the kiss you gave at parting seemed like the touches of some enchantress, thrilling my whole nature. As I walked home my heart palpitated strong and quick with joy as vision after vision of the contemplated future rose up before me. I thought we were the happiest couple beneath the stars. When I retired to my chamber it was only to dream of thee (my I still call thee so) ever dearest earthly joy. Oh Lizzie! whatever have I done that you should determine to dissolve our union of hearts. You know that I have loved you with an ever increasing intensity, and I feel to-day that I could suffer even to the death, if that were necessary, on your behalf. I love you, and I shall love you long as heart will throb. I cannot live if you love me not. Oh Lizzie if you despise me, my future, which I thought so bright and glad, will be all gloom and sadness. I must droop and die now—despised and desolate. But you won't allow this to be, will you, darling? You who declared that none should have your heart but me, will you—can you really refuse my affections and embrace another? Oh, Lizzie, do not sweep away the clouds from the horizon of my disconsolate and bleeding spirit by saying once more, 'I love you.' Write, dearest, by return, and say if you will reconsider your conclusions and love me as before. I wait in painful suspense your reply. Believe me yours in unaltered love. * * * * *

"TEA LEAVES."—Under any circumstances, it is a misnomer to call infused tea-leaves "exhausted," as they still contain a large proportion of such material as we every day consume in the form of bread, beef, and vegetables, viz., in Szechong 46 per cent., and in gunpowder 440 per cent. of nitrogen. It needs but a glance to see that, apart from any putrefactive decomposition which may be discovered in red-dried tea-leaves, they are not unfit for human food, if consumed as a vegetable.

FACETIA.

A WELL-KNOWN clergymen has been lecturing on "What Men are made of." If he could tell us what women (of fashion) are made of, his discourse would be absorbing.

A BACHELOR friend says that he dislikes young married couples, "because they are apt to give themselves airs."

The man who "lighted up with emotion" says it is cheaper than gas.

A TERRIBLE INFANT.

The other day some ladies were out visiting. There being a little two-year-old present, one of the ladies asked him if he would not kiss her. He answered:

"No."

"What is the reason you will not kiss me?"

"I'm too little to kiss you; papa will kiss you; papa kisses all the big girls."

He was permitted to play with his toys.

AN ABSTRACT CALCULATION.—Mr. O'Flaherty undertook to tell how many were at the party. "The two Crogans was one, myself was two, Mike Finn was three, and—*who*—the mischief was four? Let me see (counting his fingers), the two Crogans was one, Mike Finn was two, myself was three, and—*besides*! there was four of us; but St. Patrick couldn't tell the name of the other! Now it's myself that have it! Mike Finn was one, the two Crogans was two, myself was three, and—and—be the powers, I think there was but three of us, after all!"

"Do you think?" asked Mrs. Pepper, "that a little tamper is a bad thing in a woman?" "Certainly not, ma'am," replied a gallant philosopher; "it is a good thing, and she ought never to lose it."

A YOUNG speculator, having married a very homely girl, the possessor of a large fortune, declared that it wasn't the face of his wife that struck him so much as her figure.

"Why do you call me birdie, my dear?" inquired a wife of her husband. "Because," was the answer, "you are always associated in my mind with a bird."

Mrs. WILKIN was a beautiful blonde, and she wanted to go to Newport; so she told her mother to look for something particular for her dear papa. "And what is it, pray?" asked her mother, "that you wish so much to find for your dear papa?" "A son-in-law," was the gentle reply of the blushing maiden.

AFFECTION.

An affected lady about to be married, in a place not over four hundred miles off, went to look at some furniture. She wished particularly to have a piece of furniture to set in a corner of the parlour, upon which to place books and curiosities. She saw several, but they did not suit. It seems she could not explain what she wanted. Finally she said:

"Mister, have you got any with under-trowsers in them?"

"With what in?" ejaculated the surprised dealer in veneered cherry, &c., "with what in?"

"With under-trow-trow-trowsers in them."

"And what the deuce, madam, would you do with under-trowsers in a piece of furniture like that?"

"Why, to put shells and curiosities in, &c."

"Ah! oh! hem! You mean drawers, eh? Why didn't you say so? Walk up stairs, ma'am."

The lady collapsed, and a footman placed her in an open chair quicker than flash.

THE SLANG OF THE STAGE.

Here is an old theatrical advertisement:

"Wanted a HEAVY MAN for the Tragedy and Melodramatic business."

We have heard of "heavy fathers," but we fancy they are chiefly to be met with in light comedies. To ask for heaviness in any tragic English actor appears to us like asking for blackness in a blackberry, or sweeteness in a sugar-plum. But perhaps this heavy man may be wanted to give weight to the characters he personates. We can fancy a fat Hamlet might, merely for the novelty, make something of a hit. Certainly his pinguine, during the warm weather, would give especial point to such a passage, say, as

"O that this too, too solid flesh would melt!"—

10d.

Tenpence-halfpenny per diem is offered by an advertiser in one of last week's papers, to any lady

who is willing to undertake the duties of governess to five children and look after their "wardrobes." She must have a thorough knowledge of English, Music, French, and so on—we were nearly writing "saw on," for the situation seems to combine that of a seamstress with that of governess. Those ladies who may be on the look-out for such windfalls will feel it an extra inducement to strive for the lucky berth when they are informed that the salary is to "include laundry." There is, however, a vagueness about the manner in which this is expressed, and we should not be surprised if the announcement really means that the governess is also expected to act as family washerwoman. Why not! Remember, ladies, the salary is sixteen pounds! You say that a good cook gets more than that. Ah, but remember you are not asked to fulfil her functions. You have simply to teach the children, English, French, music, and of course any other accomplishments you may happen to have acquired, and it's tenpence-halfpenny every day in the year, remember, and possibly you may be occasionally permitted to see your friends.

HOW IT SEEKS.

STARS in the midnight's blue abyss,
So closely shine they seem to kiss;
But, darling, they are far apart;
They close not beating heart to heart!

And high in glory many a star
Glow, lighting other worlds afar,
Whilst hiding in its breast the dearth
And darkness of a fireless hearth.

All happy to the listener seem
The singer, with his gracious gleams;
His music rings, his ardour glow,
Divinely; ah, we know, we know!

For all the beauty he sheds, we see
How bare his own poor life would be;
He gives ambrosia, wanting bread;
Makes balm for hearts, with ake of head.

He finds the laurel budding yet,
From Love transfigured and tear-wet;
They are his love-drops turned to flowers
That make so sweet this world of ours!

GERALD MASSEY.

GEMS.

THE MORE we help others to bear their burden the lighter our own will be.

THREE things are important if you wish to keep friends—to give much, to ask little, and to take nothing.

THERE is no fear of knowing too much, though there is great fear of practising too little. The most doing man shall be the most knowing man.

It is worthy of notice that, while second thoughts are best in matters of judgment, first thoughts are always to be preferred in matters that relate to morality.

THOUGH we seem grieved at the shortness of life in general, we are wishing every period of it at an end. The minor longs to be of age, then to be a man of business, then to make up an estate, then to arrive at honours, then to retire.

A TENDER conscience is like the apple of a man's eye, the least dust that gathers into it affects it. There is no surer and better way to know whether our consciences are dead and stupid than to observe what impression small sins make upon them.

RISK ALLAH BEY.—This person, whose trial in Belgium caused so much interest some time since, is about to appear again before a law court in the character of a plaintiff. It appears that Risk Allah took passage on board the steamer Tevener for Beyrouth, but the vessel was wrecked and his baggage was lost. He has made a claim to a large amount upon the Messageries Impériales, and this being repudiated by the company, he has commenced a suit in the First Chamber of the Civil Tribunal of Paris.

LADY EASTLAKE has presented to the National Gallery the picture of John Bellini representing the death of St. Peter Martyr. This is the second picture which has been presented by her ladyship.

WEIGHT OF SIR JAMES SIMPSON'S BRAIN.—The weight of Sir James's brain, including the cerebellum, was fifty-four ounces. Whilst, as it is well known, the ratio between intellect and size of brain is by no means close, yet there can be no doubt that it is very important. Most of our great men have had large crania. The male brain ranges chiefly between forty-nine and fifty-three ounces, its average being forty-nine and a half (Quain and Sharpey). That of Cuvier is stated to have weighed sixty-four ounces, and that of the late Dr. Abercrombie sixty-three ounces, but it is possible that some error may have crept in the use of weights of

different standards. If not, Sir James's brain, whilst much above the average, did not nearly reach those of the celebrated men we have mentioned; but at the same time, the convolutions were remarkably numerous; they were, says a correspondent, "twisting and twining round each other, as if they could not find room within the head."

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

The following is a recipe for the preservation of milk: To every litre of unskimmed milk, previously poured into a well-annealed glass bottle, add forty centigrammes (about 6 grains) of bicarbonate of soda. Place the bottle (which must be well corked) containing the milk, for about four hours in a water bath, heated to 90 deg. Cent. (194 deg. Fahr.). On being taken out, the bottle is varnished over with tar; and in that state the milk contained in it will keep sound and sweet for several weeks.

ARTIFICIAL MARBLE.—An excellent imitation marble veneer can, it is said, be made by first boiling 6 lbs. of glue in sixteen pints of water, until it is cleared of deleterious substances, and then adding thereto a pint of glycerine. Next boil 3 lbs. of resin in three pints of linseed oil, until the resin is entirely dissolved. Mix the above solutions in a boiling state, and stir the composition until it becomes of a white colour. The colours required to be mixed with this white composition for purposes of ornamentation and design are separately sifted in a dry powdered state. A suitable quantity of each colour is then placed in a heap on a slab or other surface, and a hollow or recess made therein to receive as much of the above-described composition in a boiling state as will absorb the colour, and this mixture is then kneaded until it attains the consistency of putty.

MISCELLANEOUS.

AN international exhibition is to be opened at Cassel on the first of June this year, and will continue open for three months.

WITHIN two days last week there arrived at Greenock, in two vessels from Trinidad, 18,000 coco-nuts.

The Queen has expressed her intention to give a prize of one thousand francs for the best figure, sculpture or painted, by female artists under 25 years of age, in the international exhibition of 1871. The competition will be international.

AN ITALIAN MYSTERY.—A Florence letter states that M. Leman, the French Consul-General at Leghorn, having been warned that the parties who lately murdered the Austrian Consul Inghram, intended also to assassinate him, made his escape, and took refuge on board a French ship. The prefect of Leghorn offered him a boat of the Italian navy to put him on board, but the consul thought it more dignified to go in his own boat, and ultimately the prefect accompanied him in that, while two boats bearing police agents escorted him.

THE visit of the Nawab Nazin of Bengal to this country is connected with a reduction of his annuity. We bargained in 1770, it is said, to pay him 318,000/- a year "for ever." A few years ago we reduced this to 160,000/- a year "for ever," and that sum, it is now said, has been reduced to 73,000/-, although to keep up appearances, we still make the Nawab sign a receipt for 160,000/-. Mr. Grant Duff says it is all a matter of account; but others say the Nawab must expect his allowance to be cut down in this economising age, notwithstanding the original bargain.

EARTHQUAKE IN NATAL.—Durban was visited with a severe earthquake shock on the 18th of March. About twenty minutes to two o'clock, just as people were mostly sitting down to their tiffin or dinner, a sharp and sudden shock was felt; many seemed conscious of hearing an explosion, but this sensation was probably caused by the abrupt shaking of houses, windows, and furniture, all of which rattled with greater or less disturbance. Great difference of opinion is expressed as to the direction taken by the wave. On the news being telegraphed to Maritzburg it was received there as a joke, no shock of the kind having been experienced. We are inclined to think, therefore, that the earthquake was confined to the coast.

We understand that on the abolition of the impressed stamp the Government will supply stamped wrappers for the conveyance of newspapers, which plan will do away with the inconvenience that would otherwise result from the abolition of the impressed stamp and the compulsory use of the adhesive stamp. The new stamp to be employed has been decided upon. It will be similar to the present postage stamp, but one third smaller, and instead of the words "postage one penny," it will have the words "postage halfpenny." The colour of the new stamp, as at present arranged, will be dark purple.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page		
STRANGELY MARRIED...	121	HOUSEHOLD TREASURES...	143
YORK SCARLETT...	125	MISCELLANEOUS...	143
LEIGHTON HALL...	128	WEIGHT OF SIR JAMES...	143
THE VEILED LADY...	130	SIMPSON'S BRAIN...	143
THE MYSTERY OF THE BLACK DIAMOND...	133	RISK ALLAN BRY...	143
SCIENCE...	136	No.	
ROYAL INSTITUTION...	138	THE VEILED LADY...	143
ELEGANCIAS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE...	138	commenced in...	143
STONIO...	136	STONIO, commenced in...	334
ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY...	137	LEIGHTON HALL, commenced in...	360
THE LOCKSMITH OF LYONS...	140	THE LOCKSMITH OF LYONS, commenced in...	361
LYONS...	140	YORK SCARLETT; OR, VERTICAL FIRE...	142
THE PICKED-UP LOVE LETTER...	142	THE MILLIONAIRE, commenced in...	366
FACELET...	143	MYSTERY OF THE BLACK DIAMOND, commenced in...	368
HOW IT SEEMS...	143	STRANGELY MARRIED, commenced in...	370

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

S. L. B.—Handwriting very fair.

CAPTAIN E. S.—Declined with thanks.

LINDSAY.—Handwriting free and good.

J. H.—Yes, if you are able to prove it with clearness.

M. S.—Apply at any Infantry barracks near to your residence, or at the headquarters of any regiment of Volunteers.

A CONSTANT READER.—The training time is not yet fixed. Possibly in a few days you may be able to obtain the information at the headquarters of the regiment.

J. M. E.—Handwriting bold and good. Colour of hair, pretty light brown. The warm weather has, we should think, cured the chilblains. A little mild medicine and plenty of out-door exercise are likely to send away your other ailments.

BITTERNESS.—1. It is probable that a little salt volatile, applied with a clean sponge, will answer the purpose. 2. It acts as a yellow dye; but is not otherwise injurious. 3. The ammonia, having a stimulant, might be beneficial.

ANXIOUS.—In the first instance, the time would be about a month. In the second, it is uncertain. In neither case could the letter be returned, unless it contained the name and address of the writer.

BLUE BELL.—We should say no. On the contrary, it is probable the apprentice would have a right of action against the master for breach of covenant. This opinion is, of course, subject to a perusal of the indenture.

A SAILOR.—The depth of the sea in the English Channel between France and England is 300 ft.; in the Straits of Gibraltar, 1,000 ft.; off the south-east coast of Spain, 6,000 ft.; west of the Cape of Good Hope, 16,000 ft.; and off the island of St. Helena, more than 27,000 ft.

M. Y.—The word is English, although it is seldom now used. If you refer to your dictionary, you will find that "Etwee" signifies a case for any pocket instrument, such as a knife or scissors.

P. G.—As the engagement has lasted so long, and there is still no chance of a marriage, it would be better for both parties to agree to terminate an acquaintance which cannot be beneficial to either.

A CITY MAN.—It took about forty years to build St. Paul's Cathedral. As far as the interior decorations of the dome are concerned, we believe they were never completed according to the intention of Sir Christopher Wren. There has been recently some talk of carrying out his designs which are still in existence.

REMORE.—To write and think about a bad habit is not the way to get rid of it. Having found out your mistake you must be sincere in your resolutions to amend, and that is all. Had you told the same tale to any frank and manly companion, it is very likely that he would have pleasantly replied that you were a thorough "muff." Rise early, use the cold bath occasionally, be cheerful and true, throw physic to the dogs, and the doctor's pamphlet into the fire.

ADONIS.—You must believe her, or say farewell to her love. Love and suspicion cannot co-exist. That we may be supported in our opinion, refer to Shakespeare's sonnet No. 138.

When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her, though I know she lies;
for
Love's best habit is in seeming trust,
etc., etc.

C. J. A.—A good deal has been written about Pope Joan, who is said to be the same person as Pope John VIII. It is recorded by some writers that Joan was a woman who pursued her studies and travels in the dress of a man, and that though a woman she was promoted to the pontificate. The pro's and con's have been stated by historians at some length, but the statement is considered fabulous.

CLEOPATRA.—To dye black the material must be first saturated with the acetate or iron mordant and then boiled in a decoction of logwood and madder. To improve the complexion, take a little brimstone and treacle every morning before breakfast.

ALFRED complains that the description, which our lady correspondents give of themselves, is often too meagre. He would like to know if the face is round or oval, if the eyes are lustrous or opaque, animated or quiescent, if the lips are thin or thick, and so forth. We are afraid his is somewhat exacting, and recommend him to abandon his hesitating humour and to seek the acquaintance of that lady whose description, such as it is, comes nearest to his *œvo-ideal*.

A NOVICE.—Corinthian is an appellation often given to

men of wealth whose habits are somewhat luxurious. Corinth, in days of old, was a city in which the pleasures of the world found many devotees. It was to this place that the orator Demosthenes resorted to pay a visit to the celebrated Lais. When he was informed that the value of the present she was accustomed to receive was a talent—that is, sum equivalent to about £17. sterling—he turned away, and left on record the celebrated saying: "I will not purchase repentance so dear."

M.—The law's delay is much less serious now than it was formerly. Even when the parties are most litigious, a case is now generally terminated in three or four years. But numerous cases are decided within six months from their commencement. There is on record a case which lasted 120 years, and then was only settled by a compromise. The parties were the heirs of Viscount Lisle, and the heirs of Lord Berkeley; the period, from the end of the reign of Edward IV. till the reign of James I.

H. W.—You have a good legal claim, but as the master cannot pay, the expense of the action will fall upon you, even if the verdict be in your favour. We should think, it would be more to your advantage to persuade him to cancel the agreement, and to be content with the money and time you have already lost, without plunging further into the mire.

EDINBURGH.—We think that the disapprobation of the young lady's parents should cause you to postpone the weddng for a short time, during which interval the master should have serious consideration. Of course, the father can dispose of the property in his life-time, but if at his death it remains undisposed of, there is a great probability that his daughter will necessarily be entitled to a considerable sum. For in Scotland the testamentary power stands upon a different footing to that which it has in England. In Scotland if a man die leaving a wife and child, he cannot as a general rule leave the whole of his personal property to a stranger, excluding such wife and child. He would only have a third of such property at his own disposal; and the remaining two-thirds would, notwithstanding his will to the contrary, be divided between his widow and only child, unless they had been expressly excluded by an anti-nuptial contract.

OVER THE HARE.

'Twas milking time, and the cows came up
From the meadows so sweet with clover,
And stood in the lane, while pretty Jane
Had a quiet chat with the Rover—
Such a quiet chat, that it scarcely seemed
That a single word was spoken;

While a magic spell with the night dew fell,
And the rhythm of song was unbroken.

The cattle stood at the lovers' side,

Without any show of vexation,

As though impressed that a five-bar rest

Was a part of their rest-oration.

And as Jane listened to notes that came

Eight under the bars and over,

Her heart took wing, like a silly thing,

And nestled up close to the Rover.

So over the bars the lovers lean,

In the joy of their sweet communion;

And their looks declare that poverty ne'er

Shall be a bar to their union.

Oh, sweetest music, go thread your rhymes

Now under the bars and over;

Where pretty Jane, in the fragrant lane,

Bewitched the heart of the Rover. J. P.

Y. S.—Rennet is prepared from the inner coat of a young-calf's stomach. When the calf has been killed, this portion of the intestine should be immediately secured. Out of it the coagulated milk should be taken and examined, and any substance besides curd found in it should be carefully removed. The serum left in it should be pressed out with a cloth. It should then be replaced in the stomach, with a large quantity of the best salt, and a little alum. The skins, or veals, as they are called, are then put into a pan, and covered with a solution of salt, in which they are soaked for some hours. They are afterwards hung up to dry, a piece of flat wood being put crosswise into each to stretch them out. When perfectly dried they look like parchment. The dried skin is required when oil is melted, put into a thin bag, and soaked in warm water for some hours. Half a pint of the liquor thus obtained is sufficient to curdle forty gallons of milk. Experience only can teach a person to judge of the proper strength of the rennet liquor.

JAMES R. B.—The statement was perfectly correct at the time it was made. The law has been altered within a few weeks. By the Naturalisation Act of 1870, real and personal property of every description may be taken, acquired, held, and disposed of by an alien, in the same manner as by a natural-born British subject. But an alien is not qualified even now to hold any state office, or for any municipal, parliamentary, or other franchise; and power is reserved to her Majesty in Council to suspend the operations of the Act as to the enjoyment of property by aliens, subjects of any state at war with her Majesty, during the continuance of such hostilities.

ANDREW.—The roof of Westminster Hall is unsupported by pillars. The hall is 270 feet long, and 74 feet broad. It has the reputation of being the largest room in Europe unsupported by pillars. We have read, however, of a room in St. Petersburg, unbroken by pillars or other obstructions, the length of which is said to be 650 feet, and the breadth 150 feet. Whether this room escaped destruction in the great fire of 1862 we cannot say.

FLOZIA H.—Your spelling is likely to improve if, every night, you copy carefully a portion of our journal, or any other interesting work. The engaged finger of the third finger of the right hand. An epitome of the first portion of the tale duly appeared, and contained all the facts necessary to be known for the enjoyment of the concluding chapters of the tale.

A PIGION KEEPER.—You should know the value of the birds better than we. Something depends on the state of the market, but a little less than two shillings a pair would be a fair price. If you cannot form a judgment as to the precise description, you must study your books of

ornithology. Pigeons often lay before they have completed their second year, and continue to do so for three or four years. Biberg, an author who has written on this subject, gives an idea of the astonishing fecundity of the domesticated pigeon. He asserts that, although they only lay two eggs at a time, it is possible for them to hatch nine times a year. Thus from one pair may issue in four years as many as 14,760 young. In reply to your other questions: cloth may be shrunk by being placed on a bush in your garden so that the dew may fall upon it, and your bookseller will procure you a book upon the management of poultry for a shilling.

P. E. T.—In purchasing a Government annuity, the advantage in making a transfer of consols consists in the fact that the tables are calculated upon a surrender of that stock at par, whereas it can be bought in the market at 5 or 6 per cent below par. You must not forget that age makes a material difference in the amount of the annuity granted. For the same amount of principal a person of 60 will obtain a larger annual sum than one at 50.

HARRY J., twenty-two, and has a good business with profits over £200. a-year. Respondent should possess a private income.

S. L. B., twenty-two, medium height, dark brown hair and eyes, and affectionate. Respondent must be twenty, and fond of home; a seaman preferred.

AMELIA J., twenty, 5ft. 5in., a good housekeeper, an expert needlewoman, good tempered, and affectionate. Respondent must be about twenty-three, dark, steady, and affectionate; a sailor preferred.

C. J. B., twenty-five, 5ft. 5in., dark brown hair, whiskers, and eyes, handsome, and with an income of £60. per annum. Respondent must be about twenty-one, loving, and have dark hair and eyes; a lady with a trifling income preferred.

AUBREY, twenty-six, 5ft. 7in., dark, good looking, has an income of £700. a-year, and a comfortable home. Respondent must be intelligent and amiable.

H. A. A., twenty-one, 5ft. 7in., good looking, and in the Navy. Respondent must be about nineteen, and fond of home.

W. S., twenty-one, 5ft. 7in., dark brown hair, educated, and in the Navy. Respondent must be tall, dark, good looking, and fond of home.

LITTLE GRACE, twenty-two, 5ft. 2in., auburn hair, hazel eyes, and in the Navy. Respondent must not exceed twenty-two, and be domesticated.

LOUSETTE, seventeen, petite, with dark brown hair, black eyes, Spanish kind of face, can sing, dance, and play a guitar, and cook a dinner.

BLANCHE, twenty, 5ft. 7in., a pretty blonde, with an abundance of light hair, dark eyes, can dance and sing, has an income of £60. per annum, and will have £300. on her wedding-day. Respondent should be tall, dark, with handsome whiskers and moustache; an officer in the Navy preferred.

PHILOS, twenty-nine, medium height, fair, well educated, fond of home, and with an income of £300. per annum. Respondent must be good tempered, and good looking.

EDITH, eighteen, rather tall, brown hair and eyes, loving, and amiable. Respondent must be tall, dark, and fond of home.

HILDA, nineteen, 5ft. 6in., luxuriant dark hair, dark eyes, fond of music, and domesticated. Respondent should be tall, fair, with handsome whiskers and moustache; a widower not objected to. Hilda has an income of £22 per annum.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

JOHN B.—We believe your response was duly inserted. A LOVELY OWN's letter has been received.

HENRY L.—I must send a proper description of his personal appearance, and confine his attentions to one lady. FRED. E. wished to hear from "Florence B.," who responded to him in No. 327.

VIOLETTA is responded to by "J. R. W.," holding a good position in the Navy, with every likelihood of promotion.

ROSE by—"J. S. R.," who would be happy to receive her cards, with a view to further communication.

LONELY WILLIAM by—"L. L." twenty-one, slight and graceful in figure, long wavy hair, of a rich golden brown colour, fair skin, large blue expressive eyes, arched eyebrows, long dark golden lashes, tiny hands and feet, accomplished, and possessed of property.

W. E. by—"U. S.," tall, rather dark, loving, and amiable; a milliner.

J. S. by—"C. S.," tall, dark, affectionate, and domesticated.

F. B. by—"Ethel H.," nineteen, tall, pretty, ladylike, affectionate, dark blue eyes, fond of music and singing, and well educated.

WILL R. by—"Gracie," twenty, short, and rather fair, loving, and fond of home.

JESSIE B. by—"T. H. M. C." twenty-three, and in business on his own account.

M. B. by—"Flosy," seventeen, rather tall, brown hair and eyes, loving, ladylike, and fond of home.

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PART 85, FOR JUNE, IS NOW READY. PAGE 64.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, STRAND, W.C.

†† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

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